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ABSTRACT

This instructional packet, designed to help students learn successful ways to find, keep, and leave jobs, is the third component of "The Employer's Choice" a research-based, multimedia set of instructional materials designed to prepare students for job market success. ("The Employer's Choice" is part of the "Connections" package, which represents a synthesis of significant work on education and employment and presents a coordinated set of resources to assist school administrators, counselors, teachers, and employers in helping students in their school and work transitions.) This package uses a series of case studies to present the real-life situations and experiences young people encounter in getting a job, becoming an insider, training at the worksite, and leaving a job. The instructional materials are developed in 16 concepts organized in four sections. For each concept, information, case studies, questions, analysis of case studies, and activities are provided. The sections cover the following topics: (1) getting a job, (2) becoming an insider, (3) learning at the worksite, and (4) leaving a job. Appendixes contain guidelines for completing an application and for interviewing. (KC)

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Connections
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The Employer's Choice

On the Job

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1987

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To the Student

The Employer's Choice: On the Job is designed to help you learn successful ways to find, keep, and leave jobs. It is the third component of *The Employer's Choice* materials:

- *The Employer's Choice: Priorities That Count*
- *The Employer's Choice: The Job Search*
- *The Employer's Choice: On the Job*

What Job Market Strategies Are Most Successful?

You can read information that tells you how to conduct a job search, how to get along on the job, and how to leave a job. This information will be very helpful to you as you prepare for employment. However, you will learn even more about the process of navigating the job market by doing it—by trying different methods and strategies and noting what works and what doesn't work in the job market.

The Employer's Choice: On the Job will give you a head start on this awareness. The content of this guide is based on a study of the early labor market experiences of selected youth conducted during the 12 months following their high school graduation. Details about the experiences of these young people were recorded and are presented in this guide as case studies.

Each case study details the person's background, characteristics, needs, and goals and describes how that person handled job situations within the context of his or her life.

What worked, what didn't work, why, and why not are some of the issues you will consider as you analyze the job market successes of these young people.

How Can This Guide Prepare You to Succeed in the Job Market?

The activities in *The Employer's Choice: On the Job* will help you by giving you a process for analyzing your job market behavior and for performing well in different job situations:

- Getting a Job
- Becoming an Insider
- Training at the Worksite
- Leaving a Job

Specifically, the activities will lead you to—

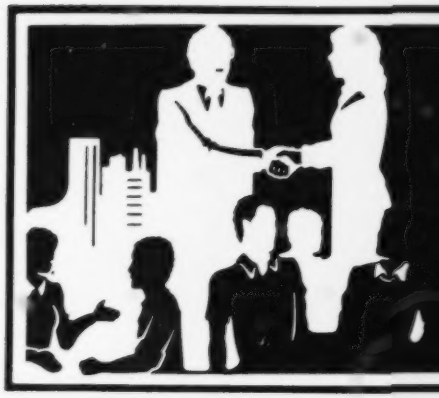
- **review** the steps required to navigate the job market,
- **examine** case studies to learn what does and doesn't work in employment,
- **analyze** why the case study situations turned out as they did,
- **recognize** the similarities between yourself and the young people in the case studies,
- **recognize** the patterns of behavior that result in conflicts or difficulties on the job,
- **determine** what you must do to ensure greater success and satisfaction on the job, and
- **practice** ways to perform in job situations through role playing, interviewing, and research activities.

Who Can Help You?

Your instructor will help you examine some of the topics and issues presented in *The Employer's Choice: On the Job* and will provide you with the resources and role playing opportunities you need to perfect your skills.

How Will You Benefit?

As you learn the ramifications of various behaviors and attitudes demonstrated by young workers in the job market, you will be able to plan your own performance more wisely. You will be able to see yourself and your actions through the eyes of employers and co-workers and know the behaviors they find acceptable. With this information, you will be able to make more informed decisions about how you will navigate the job market.



Section 1
Getting a Job

Introduction

Getting a job requires time, effort, planning, and judgment. It involves the following six major steps.

1. Finding Job Leads

What jobs are available? What businesses are hiring for the various jobs? You can learn this information from a number of sources. The more sources you contact, the more leads you will have.

2. Writing a Resume

A resume is an outline that details facts about you. It is a way to let an employer see your qualifications at a glance. If you design it properly, you can show yourself in the best possible light.

3. Searching for the Job

To begin the job search, you will need to decide which leads to follow and which jobs to seek. You will also need to decide how to contact the employers for the jobs you want. The methods you select may determine how successful you will be.

4. Filling out the Application

The application is often the first view the employer has of you. Therefore, the completed application should reflect your best qualifications. Neatness, accuracy, and completeness are the keys to an impressive application.

5. Interviewing for the Job

The interview usually follows the employer's acceptance of the application. It is where the employer hopes to learn if you will be a good worker. At this point, the employer typically decides whom to hire. For this reason, it is the place to "put your best foot forward."

6. Selecting the Right Job

How do you decide whether or not to accept a job offer? Do you accept the first offer? That depends. There are many facts to consider in making this decision. How you assess these facts may determine your job satisfaction as well as job success.

As you read this booklet, you will learn more about these steps toward getting a job. Pay attention. These tips may be just the ones to help you get hired.

Concept 1
Finding Job Leads

One way to begin the job search is to compile a list of job leads. There are many ways to do this, including the following:

Look in the yellow pages of your telephone book. Read the titles in the index, for example, Banks, Beauty Salons, and Copying Services. Find the titles of places you might work. Then, look at the businesses under those titles. List the names of the businesses where you would like to apply. Remember to consider their locations.

Look through the want ads. Read the want ads carefully. Circle the jobs that appeal to you. Add them to your list. Contact these leads first, since these jobs are available *now*.

Contact friends, relatives, and other acquaintances. Get in touch with people who will have good things to say about you. Tell these people that you are looking for a job. Explain to them the kind of work you want. List the job leads they give you.

Contact school placement offices. Talk with the counselors in your school placement office. Ask for help in finding a job and list any leads they give you.

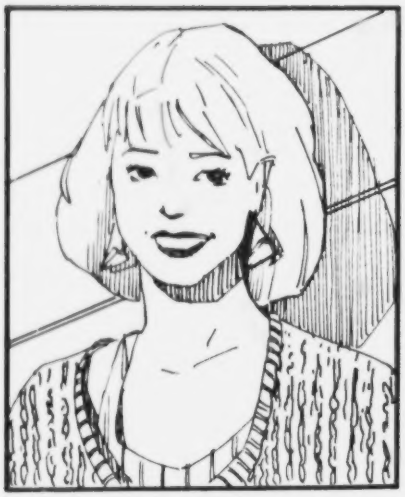
Register with an employment agency. Find the names of employment agencies in the yellow pages of the telephone book. These agencies usually charge you for finding you a job. However, they do know which companies are hiring.

Once you have the job leads, you can contact the employers by—

- telephoning to learn if the companies are hiring,
- walking into the office and asking to fill out an application, and
- asking a friend, relative, counselor, or employment agency to make the contact for you.

You will have to decide which way or ways are best for you.

Case Study: Laurie



Laurie is an attractive and outgoing 19-year-old. She graduated from a local career center where she studied drama. While in school, Laurie worked for a video production company. She was hired to be a part-time model for a slide show. Her vocational instructor recommended her for the job. After the slides were completed, Laurie was asked to work part-time as an assistant in lighting. She stayed in this job until the company moved to New York.

After graduation, Laurie applied for a second job and was hired as an instructor at a local health spa. She heard about this job opening from a friend. After a time, Laurie heard about an opening at a second health spa from another friend. Laurie thought the working conditions would be better at the second health spa. So, she applied for the job. She was hired and quit her job at the first spa.

Laurie worked at the second spa for about 2 months. During that time, she grew unhappy with her work. She decided she needed a job change. She considered looking for a job where she could work with children instead of adults. Entertainment was her real interest, but she had found no job leads in this field.

One day at work, Laurie began leafing through the yellow pages to find names of child care centers. The next day, Laurie called one of the centers to learn if they were hiring. She was told to come in for an interview. The position was full-time. It called for supervising preschool children.

During the interview, the manager told Laurie that the other employees were either college graduates or college students. Laurie was neither. However, she said, "It will be a challenge. I like that." She told the manager that she thought she could do the job. She said she wanted to use her drama skills with the children. The manager was impressed with Laurie's ambition. She hired her.

The manager accused her of stealing money.

The next day, Laurie went to work at the health spa. She was planning to give a 2-week quitting notice. But, before she did, the manager accused her of stealing money. The accusation was a mistake on the manager's part. However, Laurie quit on the spot and walked off the job.

Laurie eagerly began her job at the day care center. The job lasted less than a month. Laurie was fired by the manager because she didn't have enough control over the children.

Questions

How did Laurie get her job leads?

How could she have gotten leads that were more targeted toward her career choice?

Why is Laurie's technique of using the yellow pages a good job strategy?

How did Laurie's qualifications affect her job performance at the video production company? At the health spa? At the child care center?

Focus: Select Appropriate Job Leads

Laurie used a variety of job search strategies—friends, want ads, school instructor, and yellow pages. However, she did not think enough about how the leads she obtained fit her qualifications and interests.

Because the jobs were not in her interest area, Laurie became bored. She switched jobs frequently. When she did try to find a job where she could use her talents, such as at the child care center, she oversold her abilities. Laurie did not have a realistic picture of the job demands or of her abilities. The manager at the center was also to blame. Because she was easily impressed by Laurie's personality, she overlooked Laurie's lack of qualifications. The result was in nobody's best interest.

As you have seen, Laurie quickly acquired a questionable job history. Her many job changes give the impression that she is unstable and unreliable. In the future, Laurie will have to give more serious thought to her job choices. She may have to consider areas other than drama and entertainment. She can always use her drama talents by joining a community drama group after work hours.

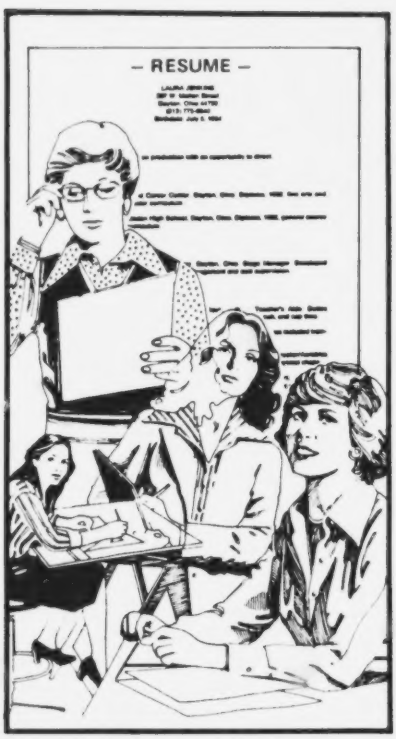
Activities

List at least three of your work interests. Find out what jobs might be available in each interest area. Talk with your school counselor to learn where you could find job information.

Make an appointment with your counselor. Find out what you can do to become an employable person in your interest areas. Then, list the courses you must take and the work experiences you should seek. Learn the attitudes you must develop to achieve your goal.

Talk with several employers. Ask what factors they consider when selecting applicants they will hire. Find out what job search strategies they recommend.

Concept 2
Writing a Resume



A resume is a concise listing of your education and training, work history, other related experiences, and references. Not all entry-level jobs require that you have a resume. However, it is always wise to have one. A resume shows that you have given thought to your job search.

Here are some tips on what to include on a resume:

Personal data about yourself. List your name, address, and telephone number.

A career objective. State the type of job you want and the skills you have. Be specific, but not too specific. State the objective in one or two sentences.

Your education and training. Include the name of the school you attended, the dates of attendance, and the degree you received. State any special training programs you have completed. Also, list skills you have acquired.

Work experiences. List the places you have worked, the dates you worked at each place, and the tasks you performed.

Special honors and awards. List the honors or awards you received and the dates you received them.

List references. References are people the employer can contact to learn about your abilities and your character. List the name, address, and telephone number of each person you use as a reference. Be sure to call the people and ask permission to use them as references before you do so.

Remember that your resume is a reflection of you. Make sure it is neat, well organized, and accurate. Make sure it is concise: most employers prefer a one-page resume. Type your resume or have it typed so it will be easy to read. Then, check it carefully for spelling and typing errors. When you are sure it is accurate, make copies on a good copying machine. Using a printing or copying company will assure you of good copies.

Case Study: Laurie

Laurie had worked at 4 different jobs since her high school graduation 1 1/2 years ago. She worked at—

- a production company part-time for 4 months until the company moved,
- a health spa for 8 months before she quit,
- a second health spa for 2 months before she quit, and
- a child care center for 3 weeks before she was fired.

After losing the job at the child care center, Laurie began the search for another job. She followed leads given by friends and relatives, but received no job offers. She also used the telephoning approach to job search. She called several television stations to request interviews. During one interview, the producer read Laurie's resume. Noting that she had varied job qualifications, he asked Laurie what she really wanted to do. Laurie replied that she wanted to be a director.

Laurie was upset when she was not hired by the television producer. She felt that he made the job seem harder than it really was. Laurie was still searching for a job several months later.

The resume on the next page is the one Laurie gave to the television producer.

Laurie had worked at 4 different jobs since her high school graduation.

Questions

What errors are in Laurie's resume?

What is missing from Laurie's resume?

What will employers ask about the dates of Laurie's employment at the child care center?

How should Laurie answer questions about why she left the job?

How would you correct Laurie's resume to make it more attractive?

Laura Jenkins
267 W. Mellon Street
Dayton, Ohio 44720

Education:

1979–1982 Linden High School
Dayton, Ohio
General Diploma

1980–1982 Hood Carer Center
Dayton, Ohio

Course study: Theatre

Experience:

Oct. 5, 1983 Good Apple Day Care
44 N. High Street
Teacher's Aide – watched children and planned activities for them

Aug. 7, 1983 – Oct. 1, 1983 Action Health Spa
4290 Scott Avenue
Instructor – training people to use the equipment

Jan. 15, 1983–Aug. 7, 1983 Body Junction
911 Buena Vista Rd.

Instructor/Aerobic Teacher – getting people in good physical shape

Aug. 1, 1982–July 1, 1983 George Candon Productions
80 Ryan Street – New York

Production assistant – Help set up lighting, sound equipment, also model

July 1980 Miss Ohio Pageant
Mansfield, Ohio
Lighting Asst. – Set up lights for the pageant

Focus: Highlight Your Qualifications

The resume Laurie prepared did not specify what type of job she wanted.

Look at the two resumes on the next two pages. They show the type of resume Laurie could have prepared to apply for the job at the television station. Notice that each resume contains a career objective at the top.

Also notice that the first resume lists Laurie's education and work, with the most recent experiences given first. This resume, which is organized in the most common order, is called a chronological resume. People who have only a few job experiences should use the chronological resume.

The second type of resume shown is called a functional resume. This style is more appropriately used when a person has had many work experiences. Then, the experiences can be grouped according to type of work. Laurie should have used this type of resume because it highlights the type of work she has done. It makes her work experience look more planned, not so random. This type of resume is also good to use if you have had a gap in employment because it does not highlight dates as does the chronological resume.

Notice that the resumes do not list all we know about Laurie. Remember—a resume is an outline. You do not have to include everything about yourself. Of course, that does not mean you should skip a job from which you were fired. Any gap in employment will be obvious.

For example, if you list one job as ending in November and the next job as beginning in March, an employer will want to know what you did between November and March. Tell the truth if you are asked. Be honest. Employers can easily check facts about your employment, and they probably will. Just have a good explanation ready of what you have done while unemployed.

LAURA JENKINS
267 W. Mellon Street
Dayton, Ohio 44720
(513) 555-8840
Birthdate: July 5, 1964

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

To obtain a position in television production with an opportunity to direct.

EDUCATION:

Sept. 1980 - June 1982	Hood Career Center, Dayton, Ohio. Diploma, 1982, fine arts and theater curriculum.
Sept. 1979 - June 1982	Linden High School, Dayton, Ohio. Diploma, 1982, general course curriculum.

SPECIAL TRAINING:

Sept. 1981 - June 1982	Hood Career Center, Dayton, Ohio. Stage Manager. Developed skills in production management and cast supervision.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Oct. 1983	**Good Apple Day Care**, Dayton, Ohio. Teacher's Aide. Duties included watching 15 children during play, lunch, and nap time.
Aug. 1983 - Oct. 1983	**Action Health Spa**, Dayton, Ohio. Instructor. Duties included training people to use the equipment properly.
Jan. 1983 - Aug. 1983	**Body Junction Health Spa**, Dayton, Ohio. Instructor/Aerobics Teacher. Duties included getting people in good physical shape.
Aug. 1982 - July 1983	**George Candon Productions**, New York, New York. Production Assistant. Duties included helping set up lighting and sound equipment and doing some modeling.
July 1980	**Miss Ohio Pageant**, Mansfield, Ohio. Lighting Assistant. Duties included setting up lights for the pageant.

LAURA JENKINS
267 W. Mellon Street
Dayton, Ohio 44720
(513) 555-8840
Birthdate: July 5, 1964

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

To obtain a position in television production with an opportunity to direct.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Production

Production Assistant/Character Model. George Candon Productions: New York, New York. Set up lighting and sound equipment and did some modeling. Aug. 1982 -July 1983.

Lighting Assistant. Miss Ohio Pageant, Mansfield, Ohio. Set up lights for the pageant.

Health Spa

Instructor. Action Health Spa, Dayton, Ohio. Trained people to use equipment properly. Aug. 1983 - Oct. 1983.

Instructor/Aerobics Teacher. Body Junction Health Spa, Dayton, Ohio. Assisted people during exercises and training. Jan. 1983 - Aug. 1983.

Miscellaneous

Teacher's Aide. Good Apple Day Care, Dayton, Ohio. Watched 15 children during play, lunch, and nap time. Oct. 1983.

EDUCATION:

Hood Career Center, Dayton, Ohio. Diploma, 1982, fine arts and theater curriculum. Sept. 1980 - June 1982.

Linden High School, Dayton, Ohio. Diploma, 1982, general course curriculum. Sept. 1979 -June 1982.

SPECIAL TRAINING:

Stage Manager. Hood Career Center, Dayton, Ohio. Developed skills in production management and cast supervision. Sept. 1981 - June 1982.

Activities

Prepare a resume to use in your job search.

Ask one of your instructors and/or parents to critique your resume.

Give your completed resume to at least one local employer. Ask that employer to comment on your resume and make suggestions on ways you can improve it.

Type your resume, proofread it, and correct any errors. Make several copies and keep them handy. Update your resume as you acquire new skills.

Concept 3
Searching for the Job

There are a number of ways to structure the job search. The search strategy you choose depends upon your priorities. What are your priorities in selecting a job?

- Type of job?
- Type of business?
- Availability of jobs?
- Pay?
- Location?

You may care about all these factors, or you may care about only a few. Nevertheless, you will have to decide what is most important to you when you look for work. Then you will know the best way to begin the job search.

Case Study: Cindy

Cindy's main purpose in seeking work was to gain financial independence. Married at the age of 20, Cindy recently separated from her husband. At the time of her job search, Cindy had just moved back home and was living with her mother. Cindy was not interested in following a specific career path. She merely wanted a job where she could earn money to rent an apartment and buy a car.

Cindy began her job search by systematically applying at each of a number of fast-food restaurants. All of the restaurants were located on one street. Cindy had been successful in the past by using the walk-in job search strategy. She was confident that she would be successful again. And she was. One of the restaurants hired her to tend the salad bar.

Cindy had worked as a clerk in a shoe store as part of her distributive education program in high school. After graduation, she worked as a clerk in a women's clothing store. She

She merely wanted a job where she could earn money.

also worked as a helper in a sandwich shop. These jobs gave Cindy experience in working with customers.

After several weeks of working at the restaurant, Cindy decided to apply for a second job. She had wanted to work full-time but was being scheduled to work only 10 hours per week. She decided that one way to get a 40-hour work week was to work part-time at 2 jobs. To locate her second job, Cindy relied on the same job search strategy—walking into a business and applying for a job. Again, she was successful. This time she was hired to work at a service station for $3.65 per hour.

For a time, Cindy worked both jobs. Because each job involved working a variable schedule, Cindy eventually had time conflicts between the two jobs. She chose to work more hours at the service station because they paid her more per hour. When Cindy missed work at the restaurant because of this, she was fired.

Questions

Why is the walk-in job search strategy successful for the type of jobs Cindy was seeking? What are the benefits of the walk-in type of job search?

What influenced the employer to hire Cindy?

How did Cindy's lack of career direction influence her job search?

What are some negative effects of Cindy's approach to the job search?

Cindy looked for a second job when she didn't get enough hours at the first restaurant. What else could she have done?

Focus: Consider Your Priorities

Cindy knew her overall goal for employment—getting a full-time job that would allow her to support herself. She decided to look for jobs in fast-food restaurants. She did this not because they were appealing to her, but because there were so many of them in one location.

The job search strategy of walking into a business and applying for a job was efficient as well as successful for Cindy. It reduced the amount of time required to get from one place to another to apply. It reduced the amount of money required for transportation. It eliminated the extra effort required for a more selective type of job search. Since fast-food restaurants frequently hire new employees, Cindy's chances of getting a job in this type of business were good.

Cindy had several things in her favor: she was out of school, she had worked in other entry-level jobs, and she wanted to become financially independent. These facts gave employers a good impression about her and about her attitude toward work. Cindy was a good candidate for the entry-level job of tending the salad bar.

Not in Cindy's favor was her lack of career planning. If she had decided on a career in restaurant management, she might have limited her job searches to restaurant jobs. In this way, each job she acquired would have given her additional experience, thereby qualifying her for positions with more responsibility—and eventually more money. It might also have made the employer more ready to train her and give her more hours and responsibility. As it is, Cindy's random experiences in unrelated, entry-level jobs will most likely keep her at an entry-level position for some time.

Cindy's failure to consider other options is also seen in the way she handled her problem of too few hours. Cindy could have told her employer, Tom, about her concern. She could have assured him that she was reliable—that he could trust her for more hours of work. Then, he might have solved her problem by giving her more hours and eliminating her need to seek a second job.

Schedule

	Hrs.
Maria	15
Galen	25
Cindy	25
Carlos	30
Tim	20
Jade	20

Activities

Think about the type of job you want. Then think about the other considerations you have: pay, hours, location, type of business and so forth. List the job considerations in order of priority. Write a paragraph describing the type of job search process you will follow. Ask your instructor to review your plan and comment on it.

Assume that you work for a fast-food restaurant. Also assume that your employer has scheduled you for 10 hours per week when you want to work 20. Her reason for limiting your hours is so she can hire many workers. In that way, if one worker quits, calls in sick, or takes a vacation, she will have other staff. Role-play a scene with the employer. Try to convince her that she should rely on you for 20 hours per week.

Concept 4
Filling Out the Application

Most employers will ask you to fill out an application when you apply for a job. To do this, you must know the following facts:

- Your Social Security number
- Your current address, including city, state, zip code, county, and township
- Telephone numbers where you can be reached
- Names and addresses of schools you attended
- Dates you attended the schools and the diploma given by each
- Names of past employers and dates of employment
- Your position and/or responsibilities
- Names, addresses, and businesses of people you list as reference

Neatness is important when filling out an application. In a recent study, a number of employers were asked to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire asked how they would respond to various behaviors and attitudes of job applicants. The results showed that only 1 percent of the employers said they were not impressed by the applicant who completed the application neatly and accurately.

How were employers influenced by applicants who filled out the job application in a neat and correct manner? Here's how:

	Percentage of Employers
Not at all:	**1%**
Somewhat positively:	**22%**
Positively:	**48%**
Very positively:	**29%**

Case Study: Charles

Charles is an 18-year-old who has been unemployed for about 6 months. He was fired from his last job at a sheet metal shop. He spends a lot of time with his friends who are also looking for work. He earns some money by doing yard work, such as mowing lawns.

Charles was arrested several times while partying late at night with his friends. He was convicted on a charge of driving while intoxicated and a charge of disorderly conduct. For the first charge, Charles was given a chance to work in a nursing home for 2 weeks instead of going to jail. But Charles had to serve a 10-day jail sentence for the second charge of disorderly conduct.

Charles met a friend at a large pizza restaurant. While they were drinking beer and waiting for their pizza, Charles decided to apply for a job. So, he asked the waitress if they were hiring. The waitress told Charles, "The manager has just hired someone. We don't have any openings." However, she told Charles that he could fill out an application at the counter anyway.

Charles walked up to the counter and asked the cashier for an application. The cashier gave it to him. Borrowing a pen from his friend, Charles filled out the personal history section of the application. When he filled out the education section, he misspelled a word. Seeing this, he scribbled it out with heavy dark ink.

When Charles read the question asking about previous convictions, he asked his friend how he should respond. They decided Charles would never get the job if he answered the question honestly. So, Charles lied. He checked "No," indicating that he had never been convicted of any misdemeanor or crime.

Then, Charles filled out the work history section of the application. He decided to leave off the job at the sheet metal shop where he was fired. He told his friend, "They'll never give me a good reference anyways." Because Charles couldn't remember some of the beginning and ending dates for two other jobs, he just guessed. He lied to close some of the gaps in his work history. He couldn't remember his supervisor's name at the nursing home either. This upset Charles because he knew the supervisor would give him a good reference. He thought about it while he looked over his application. Then, he realized he had put the supervisor's name down for the wrong job. At that point, Charles decided he should not cross out any more mistakes, so he left the error on the application. Because he couldn't remember the exact address and phone number of the nursing home, he wrote only the street name. He left the phone number space blank.

Charles would never get the job if he answered the question honestly.

Charles signed the application and handed it to the cashier. On his way out of the restaurant, he winked at the waitress and said, "Put in a good word for me, okay?"

Charles was never called for the interview.

Questions

In your opinion, what did Charles do right? What did he do wrong?

What should Charles have done about his police record?

How could Charles have been more complete and accurate in the job history section? In Charles's case, do you think the employer would have responded differently if Charles had been honest?

Given his past history, what could Charles do to improve his chances for future employment?

Focus: Be Prepared with Facts

Most employers will have you fill out an application when you apply for a job. Therefore, it is a good idea to write the facts you will need on a sheet of paper to take with you. Then, you can easily copy the facts onto the application where needed.

Read through all the questions before writing anything. Then, write all facts as neatly as possible. Print, using a pen that writes cleanly. If you don't know how to spell a word, use a different word. If you take the application home to complete, use a dictionary if necessary. Try to type the application if you can.

As with a resume, accuracy and honesty are crucial. Employers can check facts. If you get hired, and an employer later learns you lied on the application, you could be fired.

Activities

Read the Guidelines for Completing an Application in the appendix.

Ask your instructor for Worksheet 1, a blank application, to read. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, write all the facts you will need to complete the application.

Fill out Worksheet 1, the blank application you received from your instructor. Then, pair up with another student and take turns playing the roles of employer and job applicant. Assess each other's application. Give suggestions for ways to improve each one.

Concept 5
Interviewing for the Job

At the interview, employers get their impressions of the kind of worker you will be if hired. They use the interview to assess your abilities, skills, attitude, and behavior. They learn about you—your interest in the job, your enthusiasm for the work, and your communication skills. To get clues about you and your attitudes, employers look at your—

- appearance,
- mannerisms,
- posture, and
- facial expression.

To learn about your communication skills and abilities, employers listen to—

- the language you use,
- the way you speak, and
- the things you say.

Case Study: Karen

Karen graduated with a C average from a large public high school. She applied for and got a job at a local health spa several months after graduation. She heard about the job from her friend, Donna, who worked at the spa. Donna told Karen that the spa was desperate for workers. On Donna's advice, Karen applied for the job. She dressed in dark slacks and a blouse as Donna suggested. (This is the uniform required for spa workers.) Karen was hired on the spot and put to work immediately. Karen is attractive and outgoing. She felt that she got the job because—

- she is attractive and outgoing,
- her friend recommended her, and,
- the spa needed workers immediately.

She used flip, coarse language with the customers.

Once on the job, however, Karen's personality and appearance were unable to offset her poor behavior. Karen was careless in her work. She used flip, coarse language with the customers. She was frequently absent. This behavior certainly did not please her employer. Finally, when the employer caught Karen in a lie about why she was absent from work, he fired her.

Karen began her second job search by reading the want ads in a newspaper. She saw an ad for a desk clerk job at a local motel. She went to the motel to apply for the job in person. Again she dressed in nice slacks and a blouse. She took time to present an attractive appearance.

Karen was told by the employer that the desk clerk job was already filled. However, she was offered a job in housekeeping, which she accepted. She told the employer that she would like a desk clerk job as soon as one was available. Within a few days, Karen was offered part-time work at the desk, and her hours in housekeeping were reduced. Karen pursued her desire for a full-time desk clerk job with the manager. After several weeks, she got the position.

Questions

What two job search strategies did Karen use?

What steps did Karen take to prepare for the interview?

Why was Karen successful in each interview? What impressed employers the most?

What factor(s) did each employer overlook when hiring Karen for the job?

What might have convinced the second employer to give Karen a chance, even though she had been fired from her first job?

What did Karen's willingness to accept the housekeeping job say to the hiring employer?

Why was Karen's decision to accept the housekeeping job a good one when she really wanted the desk clerk job?

Focus: Present a Good Image

Karen used two job search strategies to help her locate jobs. However, her personality and appearance seem to be the most important factors influencing the employers to hire her. The spa worker job and the desk clerk job both involved working with people. The employers hiring for both of these jobs wanted employees who could meet the public well. Therefore, Karen's attractive appearance and outgoing personality were in her favor.

Karen's willingness to consider other work options was also important in her job search. Once she was employed as a housekeeper at the motel, Karen had an inside track to the desk clerk job. She could impress the employer with her good work as a housekeeper and with her perseverance in seeking the other job. She did this until she got the job she wanted.

Much of Karen's poor job performance in the spa job was related to bad attitude. Therefore, Karen's willingness to work toward the desk clerk job may have indicated a change in attitude to the motel employer.

A recent study of employer hiring decisions showed that bad attitude has a very negative effect on employers. The employers in the study watched videotaped interviews of applicants for clerical, retail, and machine trades jobs. They looked at behaviors and attitudes typically demonstrated in interviews. Then, they decided whether or not they would hire the person who demonstrated each characteristic. Some interesting results of this study are shown in a chart below. The chart shows the percentage of employers who would hire applicants, who demonstrated each of the characteristics when applying fo the specified jobs.

Interview Behavior

	Percentage of Employers Who Would Hire		
Interview Behavior	**Clerical**	**Retail**	**Machine Trades**
Inappropriate appearance	92.9	64.3	100.0
Inappropriate language	15.2	7.7	44.4
Bad attitude	0.0	0.0	11.1
Poor nonverbal behavior	40.6	15.4	75.0

Activities

Assemble in a group with classmates. Make a list of guidelines you should follow when interviewing for a job. Present your list to other groups in the class. Comment on each other's lists.

Read the Guidelines for Interviewing in the appendix.

Role-play several interview scenes. In the first scene, present a positive appearance and attitude. In the next scene, show a bad attitude in what you say and do. Ask your classmates to discuss the positive and negative aspects of each interview.

Role-play another set of interviews. In the first scene, act out an interview for a job in a fast-food restaurant. In the second scene, role-play an interview for an auto mechanic job. Then, enact an interview for a sales clerk job in a clothing store. Lead a discussion of the differences among the interviews.

Concept 6
Selecting the Right Job

Which is the right job for you? Which job will satisfy most of your needs? To decide if a job is for you, you will need to learn the following facts about the job:

- Work hours
- Tasks and responsibilities
- Types of people alongside of whom you will work
- Job location
- Dress code
- Salary

It is best to consider these facts about a job very carefully before you decide to accept a job offer. When you accept a job, you make a commitment. And, commitments aren't easy to break. If you break them too often (by quitting), you will be considered unreliable.

Case Study: Betty

Betty, a 19-year-old with musical talent, loved working with a new wave band. She played bass and sang—just what she had always wanted to do. There was only one problem. Betty did not make enough money at this job to support herself. The band just didn't get enough bookings. Thus, Betty was forced to look for a second job.

The other band members were in the same situation. Three of them had jobs at a local bank. They got Betty an interview with the personnel manager. She recommended Betty to the department manager of VISA accounts. Although the manager was unable to hire her, he referred Betty to the customer inquiry department. There, after being interviewed by two managers, she was hired to work as a phone representative at a rate of $3.50 per hour for 30 to 35 hours per week.

She could save money to join the band when it moved to California.

Working both jobs was difficult for Betty. The band's late hours made it difficult for her to wake up the next morning for her bank job. She was scolded several times for being tardy. She was even put on probation for a time. Betty became discontented at the bank: she disliked the strict hours and felt the tasks were boring. She talked about seeking another job that paid more so that she could save money to join the band when it moved to California. Betty didn't care where she worked, saying, "A job is a job."

Through friends, Betty heard about an opening in food services at the local hospital. The job paid $6.02 per hour. She also learned about an opening for a hostess at a hotel that paid $4.50 per hour. Betty applied for both jobs but was never called for an interview. She was not surprised because she believed you had to know someone in the company to get a job.

Finally, a friend who worked at a grocery store told Betty about an opening. The friend spoke to the manager about Betty. Betty walked in and applied for the job. Several weeks after that she was hired. The job paid $4.10 per hour. It involved flexible work hours, which suited Betty's needs.

After she was hired, Betty gave 2 weeks' notice at the bank. She explained that she would need the next 7 [illegible] off to take the training course at the grocery store. Whe[illegible]ank refused to give Betty the time off, she walked off th[illegible].

Questions

What are some of the drawbacks of Betty's career choice as a musician? What other careers have a high-risk employment factor?

What frustrations will Betty have to deal with until her band makes more money? Do you think these frustrations will be worth the risk that in time the band will be successful? Why? For how long?

Why did Betty believe that you have to know someone to get a job? How did this belief limit her approach to a job search?

Why is using friends and relatives a good job search strategy, especially for young applicants?

If Betty really meant "a job is a job," why was she discontented at the bank?

Focus: Match Your Needs to Employers' Needs

Selecting a job area that interests you and for which you have related skills is the first step in the career decision-making process. However, there are other factors to consider, including the following:

- How many jobs will be available to me if I work in this career?
- What income can I expect to receive working in this career?
- What hours will I need to work?
- In what type of business will I likely work? Small or large? Private or public?
- How much education and training will I need and how much will this cost?

Obviously, a person who wants to become an engineer will answer these questions differently than a person who wants to become a typist—or a person who wants to sing in a band. Knowing the answers to these questions can help a person decide what trade-offs to make when deciding on a career. Betty's career choice was to sing with a band. To do this, she traded off financial security, daytime work hours of 8 to 5, and numerous job options. She was forced to find a second job that could provide her with a regular income.

In conducting her job search, Betty relied on the advice of friends and relatives. This is an excellent way to find out what jobs are available, what companies are hiring, and the names of key people to contact. It also provides a way to learn inside information about the job, the employer, and the company. These facts help a job seeker decide if the job is right.

Having a personal recommendation by someone the employer knows is also helpful to the applicant. This is especially true for young job seekers who have limited work history. Such input gives the employer additional information upon which to base a hiring decision.

In her first job search, Betty thought about how she could get a job. However, she did not think about the kind of job that would satisfy her and in which she could satisfy the employer. Her comment that "a job is a job" reflects the fact that she didn't try to match her needs with the bank's employer needs. It was only after she had worked for some time that Betty realized (1) the strict bank hours were too demanding for her when coupled with her band job, (2) the job tasks did not appeal to her, and (3) the amount of money she was earning was less than she could have obtained elsewhere. It became obvious that the bank job was not satisfying Betty's needs. However, Betty was not satisfying the bank's needs either.

Betty was insensitive to the fact that the bank was relying on her efforts from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. She showed this by appearing late for work and by walking off the job when the bank wouldn't give her an immediate 2-day leave. When she applied for the job at the grocery story, Betty did consider the factors of money and work hours. By matching her job requirements with the employer's job requirements, Betty improved her chances for successful employment.

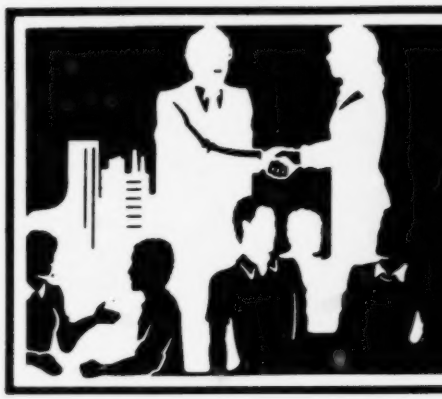
Activities

Decide on a job that you would like to seek. Find out and list the following things about the job you selected:

- Tasks required
- Education and skills needed
- Cost of education and training
- Work hours
- Geographic locations where you might work
- Amount of income you can expect to earn
- Number of job opportunities that will be available to you

List any trade-offs you will have to make to realize your career goals.

Write one paragraph explaining why a worker has an obligation to meet the needs of the employer. Write another paragraph describing the personal as well as professional benefits a worker realizes by meeting employer needs.



Section 2
Becoming an Insider

Introduction

You have succeeded in getting a job. Now your task is to become an "insider," an accepted member of the work force in your new place of employment. This guide is designed to help you find ways of fitting into this new group.

A few years ago, a popular television show was based on the misadventures of Mork, an alien from the planet Ork. Mork was sent to Earth to learn about its inhabitants. The plot revolved around Mork's humorous attempts to behave like an earthling. Mork did not know what behavior was acceptable on earth. He often made mistakes that showed he didn't quite fit in. Sometimes he had conversations with plants. Frequently, he had language problems because he took things too literally. For example, when asked for "a little wine," Mork whimpered like a dog.

All of us feel like aliens at some time in our lives. We enter new and unfamiliar situations. We try to become members of new groups. We want to feel at home—to be insiders, not aliens. Mork's experience on the planet Earth is not unlike a young person's entry into the workplace. New workers often feel like aliens when they begin a job. It is important that young people learn how to become accepted employees quickly. Acceptance promotes a sense of well-being and contributes to job success.

Becoming an insider affects relationships with co-workers, performance evaluations, termination and promotion decisions, and employee benefits and raises. In other words, becoming an insider is very important to any employee's fitting into the workplace.

Read the following questions. They will help you find out what you know about becoming an insider in the workplace. They will give you some new ways to think about what you already know.

Write your answers to each of the questions on a sheet of paper.

Questions

1. Think about Mork, an alien who wants to be accepted as an earthling. How can Mork discover what is acceptable behavior and what is not?
2. Mork was aided by Mindy, a friendly earthling. Can you think of ways in which Mindy might have helped Mork learn the habits of earthlings?
3. Mork was troubled by words that are pronounced the same but have different meanings (for example, vein, vain, vane). Work settings frequently have their own jargon or specialized language. Can you think of any examples? Talk with your parents and friends to learn about the jargon of their workplaces.
4. You are a member of many different groups, such as your family, your school, or your friends. How many groups do you belong to? List as many of these groups as you can.
5. How did you become a member of each group? Write a description of the way in which you became a group member next to the group's name (for example, basketball team—tryouts; choral club—audition).
6. Most of us do not behave the same way in all of the groups to which we belong. For example, we may use very different language in the presence of our family than we use among our friends. What behaviors do you change as you move from group to group?
7. Sometimes we change behaviors to help us fit into a group. For example, we might change our clothing styles or slang to fit into a new school. Have you had this or a similar experience? Can you remember how you learned which behaviors were accepted in the new group? Did anyone help you. If so, how?
8. If you work, think about your behavior as a worker. Is your behavior on the job the same as your behavior with your friends? How is it the same? How is it different?

Discuss your answers with other classmates. Then, read the information in this book. It will help you plan how you can fit into the workplace.

Concept 7
Knowing What Is Expected of You

The first days on a job can be overwhelming. There is so much to learn. It is hard to remember all the things you must do and how to do them. That is why it is helpful to keep a list. On a sheet of paper write the tasks you must do and when you must do them. You can study the list at night and check it during the day until you know it well.

Your supervisor will tell you about your tasks and responsibilities. But you will learn a lot more by watching your co-workers. Notice the extra things they do. These are the things your employer will expect you to do too.

Case Study: Bob

Bob is a recent high school graduate. The summer after graduation he got a part-time job as a waiter in a small restaurant. Bob thinks this job will help him learn how to deal with the public. It is a skill he will need in the future. Bob works daily between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., the busiest time of the day.

Bob was hired by Marion, who is responsible for his training and supervision. Marion likes Bob and wants him to succeed. She tells him, "I expect all of my employees to work hard. I am strict, but fair."

Marion shows Bob how to do his job while he works beside her. Each day, Bob is able to handle a little more responsibility. After 2 weeks, Bob says, "I'm ready to work on my own." He is confident that he can take orders, deliver the food, bus the tables, and complete other assigned tasks. Despite Bob's inexperience and slowness, Marion allows Bob to work on his own. She is sure that his work will improve with time and knows that her more experienced employees will help him.

"I'm tired of covering for him."

Most of the other restaurant employees are middle-aged women. They have worked in this restaurant for a long time, they work well together, like a team. They do their own jobs efficiently. They also cooperate with each other. For this reason, the restaurant operates smoothly.

Although they have assigned stations, each waitress helps the others when necessary. Marion supervises two other restaurants as well. Therefore, she relies on the opinions of her experienced employees when she makes personnel decisions. From time to time she asks, "How is Bob doing? Is he providing the necessary help during lunch hour?"

At first the responses of the waitresses were vague. They said things like, "He's OK, I guess," or "He'll be OK when he's had more experience." However, after several weeks, the comments became increasingly negative:

> "It's been over a month now and Bob is still too slow when he serves the customers. He takes too long to clean off his tables. I'm tired of covering for him."
>
> "We all try to help each other. If I have two big orders coming out of the kitchen at the same time, someone else is always right there to help me. I do the same for them. With Bob, it's different. We help him when he needs it. But he takes care of only his tables. Then he stands around doing nothing.
>
> "Three times this week, I had to take care of one of Bob's chores—washing the pots and pans—as well as doing my own. I don't think it's fair."

Questions

Are you surprised that Marion consults with the other employees about Bob's progress? Why or why not? Can you think of some reasons that supervisors in other work settings might ask senior employees about the newer workers?

Bob is the only young man waiting on tables in this restaurant. His co-workers are all middle-aged women, about the same age as his mother. Do you think this matters? How might this be an advantage to him? How might it be a disadvantage?

Why do you think Bob's co-workers were so vague in their first responses to Marion's questions about Bob? Why do you think they changed their answers a few weeks later?

What could Bob have done to learn what his employer and co-workers expected of him? Why is that important to his job success?

Focus: Cooperation Is Desired and Expected

Bob didn't learn enough about the job. He learned the tasks required. But he didn't learn what was expected of him. If he had watched the other workers, he would have noticed that they helped each other. Cooperation is an important ingredient to the success of any group. Each member has to do more than his share for the work to run smoothly. This is true in families, in friendships, and in the workplace.

Cooperation indicates respect and concern for others. The women cooperated to help each other. That is why they worked well together. They cared enough to be considerate of each other. When Bob did only his own tasks, he was telling other workers that he was interested only in himself. The waitresses were complaining as much about his lack of concern for them as they were about the extra tasks they had to do.

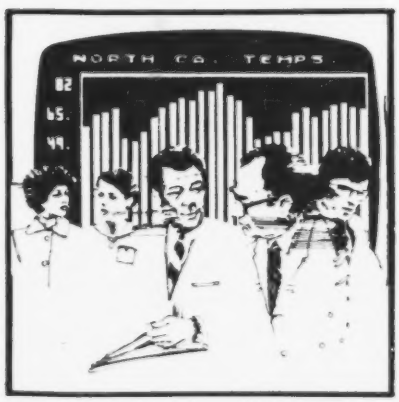
Activities

For 2 days, do only your assigned tasks at home. Don't offer to help anyone. Don't offer to do anything extra. Notice how other family members act toward you. Then, for 2 days, offer to help others when you are finished with your tasks. Be cheerful and cooperative. Notice how other family members act toward you. Are they more cheerful toward you? Do they offer to help you?

Continue your efforts at cooperation for a longer period of time—2 weeks, even 2 months. Soon it will become a habit. As such, it will help you in the future. You will notice a difference in your relationships.

Conduct interviews with individuals employed in various work settings (parent, teacher, friend, neighbor, and so forth). Ask them about the unwritten rules and expectations of their jobs. Find out how they discovered these unwritten rules. When everyone in the class has conducted an interview, share the results. Make a list of the informal rules in the work sites.

Concept 8
Understanding the Behavior of Others



At times, each of us tries to interpret the behavior of other people. Our interpretations determine how we respond to these people.

Suppose that you pass a good friend in the school corridor. You call to your friend but receive no response. She does not look at you but continues to walk in the opposite direction. You are puzzled by her strange behavior and try to think of possible explanations.

Maybe your friend is preoccupied with an exam that is scheduled for later that day. Perhaps she is concerned about a parent who is seriously ill. Perhaps you recall that you made a negative remark about her to a third person and are wondering if it got back to her. Perhaps she just didn't hear you.

Any of these may be a possible explanation for your friend's behavior. The one you choose depends upon how much you know about your friend and about the situation. Your choice also depends upon how you feel about yourself—whether you feel confident about your role as friend. Whatever you decide, your choice of what to think will affect the way you behave the next time you meet your friend.

These same types of behavior interpretations occur in the workplace. They will affect the way you think about and treat others. They will also affect the way others think about and treat you. That is why it is good to think the best about people until you learn the facts. Although you can't do anything about the way others think and behave, you can do something about the way you think and behave. And it may be catching!

Case Study: Bob

Marion continues to observe Bob as he works on the job and is concerned about two situations she observed. On one occasion, she saw Bob grab a piece of bread and shove it into his mouth as he walked toward the kitchen with an order. He did this even though he had already been told that waiters were not permitted to eat while working. Also, twice when Bob was sick, his father called Marion to tell her Bob would not be coming to work. Bob's father called at 11:00 a.m., the time Bob is supposed to begin work. Marion thought, "Why didn't Bob speak for himself? Is he afraid to call me? Why did his father wait until it was too late for me to find extra help for the lunch rush? On both days, the other workers had to work harder to make up for Bob's absence!"

Marion scheduled a meeting with Bob in order to help him realize the problem. She wanted to discuss her concerns with him. Marion said, "Bob, I am concerned about your work habits. Even your co-workers are complaining. By this time, you should be doing the job well. I have listed all of your tasks on paper. They are (1) wait on tables, (2) bus tables, (3) assist the other workers when necessary, and (4) wash the pots and pans after the lunch hour. If you understand what is expected, I want you to sign this paper. Sign your name where it says, '"I understand that if I do not do all of the jobs listed here, I will be fired."'

"I'll sign it, but only because I think I have been doing a good job ever since I started to work here," said Bob. He signed the agreement. Later, Bob told a friend, "I was surprised by what she said. She just doesn't like me. I think I'm doing a good job. I take care of my tables. I only rest when my tables are clean and my customers have their orders. I know that I am supposed to wash the pots and pans, but sometimes I forget.

"Other times I just don't have time. All of a sudden it's 2 o'clock and time for me to quit. I can't stay just to finish up some dirty pans. Also, I've seen other people eat bread as they work. Nobody yells at them. I ate the bread because I have to work during lunchtime. I was hungry. Marion puts too much pressure on me. She is always watching me more than she watches anyone else. That's why I asked my dad to call and say I was sick. I was afraid she would yell at me. I think she is prejudiced against young people, especially boys."

Three days after his meeting with Marion, Bob took a job at a pizzeria. Bob's father called Marion at 11:30 a.m. and said, "Bob has a new job and will not be coming back to work for you." Marion responded, "Thanks for waiting until the last minute to call me." She slammed the receiver down onto the telephone. Marion explained to the other co-workers that they would have to help her cover Bob's tasks for a few days since he was not returning.

She saw Bob grab a piece of bread and shove it into his mouth.

Questions

How might Bob have learned what Marion and the others expected of him?

How did Marion interpret Bob's failure to call her when he was unable to come to work?

What could Marion have done when she was first upset by Bob's behavior?

How did Marion's action of having Bob sign the work agreement reflect her interpretation of his behavior?

How did Bob interpret Marion's request that he sign the work agreement?

How did Bob act in response to that interpretation?

What role do feelings play in our relationships with other people?

Focus: Communication Is the Key

Think about the people in the case study. Marion believes that Bob's behavior in not calling is caused by immaturity and inexperience. Bob believes that Marion's actions are caused by a prejudice against young workers. Both people acted on the basis of their assumptions about the other person's intentions. The end result is that Bob no longer works at the restaurant.

Many young workers have fears and insecurities about their jobs. Because of this, they act in ways that confuse and disturb their employers. The young workers, in turn, are confused and disturbed by their employers' responses. When you are confused about something your employer says or does, admit it. Tell the employer that you are confused. Explain why. Ask what you can do to make the situation better. Direct and open communication can eliminate some of the misinterpretations.

Suppose, for example, that Bob had said to Marion, "Having to sign this agreement makes me feel that you dislike me," or suppose that Marion had said to Bob, "When your father calls to tell me you are sick, it makes me feel that you are not responsible." Do you think the outcome might have been different? Why or why not?

Be open-minded when you think about why others act as they do. Understand that not everyone thinks alike. Sometimes people make mistakes—just like you do. They draw the wrong conclusions from a behavior or situation they observe. When this happens, understand it is a mistake, not a personal attack.

Try to see things from the other person's point of view. This may help you think of other explanations for their actions.

What if Bob had realized that his co-workers had to do more work when he was not there? Then, he might have called Marion early so she could find a replacement. Good communication between Marion and Bob would have made this possible. What if Marion had understood that Bob wasn't comfortable talking on the phone and therefore asked his father to call? Then, she might have reacted differently. She could have tried to make Bob feel more comfortable about calling her. She could have explained to him why she needed to know early in the day when he was too sick to come to work.

Activities

Think of some examples from your own experiences in which seeing things from another person's point of view might have eliminated some misunderstanding. Consider situations at home, in school, among friends, or on the job.

With another classmate, role-play the characters of Marion and Bob. Act out the meeting at which Bob is required to sign the agreement. Make up your own dialogue. Try to make the situation turn out positively.

With another student, act out the parts of an anxious parent and a teenager who is arriving home 2 hours past curfew. First, play the scene with both individuals jumping to conclusions about the causes of the other's behavior. Then, replay the scene with each person explaining clearly why he or she is behaving in a particular way. Compare and contrast the two scenes.

Write a script for a television episode. You may do this exercise individually or with a small group of four or five students.

Write the script for a skit that demonstrates the ideas presented in this unit. Use any situation you choose, imaginary or real. Perform the skit for the rest of the class.

Concept 9
Becoming a Member of a Team

At one time or another, we have all been members of a team. As new members, we behaved differently than we did after we became an "old hand" at the activities. To some extent, the same pattern is followed in the workplace.

As group members, we have certain responsibilities. However, we may be expected to behave differently than persons who are already established in the workplace. For example, the company may require that all employees arrive before 9:00 a.m. each day. However, a trusted employee of 20 years' experience may arrive late once in a while without losing any pay. In a sense, he or she has "earned" the right to a few extra privileges by previous good work. To the young worker, this often seems like unequal treatment. Of course, when he or she becomes an "old" worker, the situation may look different!

As a new employee, you may be told the formal rules and regulations of the workplace. This is rarely the case, however, with the informal or "unwritten" rules—these rules are learned from other workers. When you get along well with other workers, they tell you these informal rules to help you fit in.

Case Study: Peter and David

During the spring, Peter and David were hired as entry-level workers in a small appliance repair shop. Both young men had worked before in other job settings. Although Peter had no repair experience, his older brother David did. David had worked in another repair shop for at least 7 years. He helped Peter get this job. Peter knew some of the workers at the repair shop before he began working there. He now shares a ride to

and from work with a co-worker who lives nearby. Because of all of these factors, Peter says he "felt pretty comfortable right away."

David studied appliance repair in vocational school. He was hired when he walked in and applied for the job. He doesn't car pool because none of the other workers live close to his home. David's co-workers were surprised to learn that, at his age, he has three children. He has two from his previous marriage and one from his present marriage.

Peter and David are learning on the job. That is, they are being trained by the more experienced repairmen as they make actual repairs. Whenever they need help, they ask for it. Frequently, they learn by trial and error. That is, they try one method, and, if it fails, they try something else. Sometimes, they think they know how to do a job but are mistaken. Peter talks about a shortcut he tried:

> "The result was a disaster. Well, not that bad, but I had to do it all over again. It just didn't work so I had to go right back to step one and do it all over again. I thought I could do it a different way and it didn't work."

In situations like this, the more experienced workers gave Peter a hard time. They joked about his doing things "his own way."

David doesn't joke much with the other men. When he makes mistakes, the others call him "the dummy" behind his back. Only one employee, a man who grew up in the same suburb with David, is friendly toward him. David is usually quiet and has little conversation with his co-workers. His approach is the opposite of Peter's: David is a loner, whereas Peter believes that the most important skill for success in this job is the ability to "get along with the other guys." Peter says, "They can teach you everything else you need to know."

Now it is the end of summer. There are fewer air conditioners to repair. So, one of the new employees has to be laid off. Do you think the owners will fire Peter or David? Why?

Despite his skill and training in appliance repair, David is fired. When Peter is asked about the firing, he explains it in these words:

> David is a loner. He does things his own way. He doesn't listen to anybody. He says, "No, I'm not going to do it that way. I'm going to do it my way." He didn't last too long because he was like that. You have to listen.
>
> Everyone helps each other. He couldn't be too bossy and know-it-all.

Of course, the decision to fire David is probably much more complicated than Peter's description. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note Peter's point of view—he believes that David's firing had little to do with repair skills. Peter believes that while

The others call him "the dummy" behind his back.

he and David both tried to do things their "own way." David did nothing to blend in with the other workers.

Questions

What factors do you think are in Peter's favor in this job setting? What factors are in David's favor?

What characteristics of this particular work setting make the ability to get along with other people an essential skill? Can you think of other jobs where interpersonal skills might be even more important? Can you think of jobs where they might be less important?

What skills other than job skills are required on the job?

Focus: It Takes Effort to Fit In

To be successful in a job, you must have more than job skills. Interpersonal skills—attitude and behaviors—count too. Most employees work with other people, and that work is more productive when there is harmony among the group.

Peter knew this. He listened to the other workers and learned from them. He showed them that he respected them and their skills. He worked cooperatively with them.

David, on the other hand, worked alone—although he was part of a group. By separating himself from the others, he limited his growth. He didn't give himself a chance to learn from his co-workers. It is hard to fit in when you don't want to be part of the puzzle pattern. And, employers and workers are quick to note that the pattern isn't as perfect when a piece is missing.

Activities

Invite a business person to your class to discuss the ways that young people learn to fit into a particular industry.

Look up the word *mentor*. Could a mentor be helpful to a new worker? How? Do you think Peter may have had a mentor?

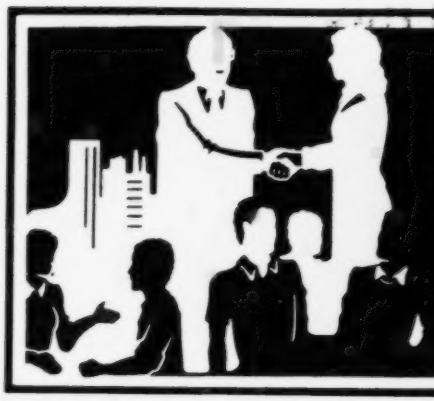
Form an imaginary company with one or two of your classmates. First, determine the type of business you would like to operate. Then, discuss the kinds of behavior you will expect from your employees. Make a list of the 10 most popular expectations. Tell why each of them is important to you and to your business. Decide how you will communicate these expectations to your employees. Determine what you will do if an employee tells you that one or more of your expectations are unreasonable.

Play a game. Send two members of the class out of the room. While they are outside, make up some unwritten rules of the class (for example, only those wearing red sweaters may sit in the first row; everyone must write with pencils, not pens; or boys must sit on one side of the room and girls on the other).

Ask the two students to return to class. As class continues, ask them to try to learn the unwritten rules. At the end of the day, ask the two students to tell you what rules they detected. Have them explain the signals or cues that enabled them to learn the rules.

Engage in a group activity with four or five other students. Discuss how you would advise a young person who wants to know how to fit better into a new workplace. Make a list of your recommendations. When your group is finished, meet with other groups in your classroom. Share your lists with each other. Try to compose a master list of guidelines for new workers.

Shakespeare said, "To thine own self be true." Can a young person follow this advice and still fit into the workplace? Use this question as a topic for a group discussion or use it as a topic for a paper. Support your answer with well-reasoned arguments. You may use your own personal experiences to support your opinion.



Section 3
Learning at the Worksite

Introduction

How do you learn what you are to do once you are hired? How will you be trained? Who will train you? How long will the training last? How will you be evaluated?

To find out how much you know about training, complete the following statements. Write your answer to each question on a separate sheet of paper.

1. New employees are trained by—

   a. supervisors more often than by co-workers.
   b. supervisors less often than by co-workers.
   c. co-workers, but only rarely.
   d. supervisors, but only rarely.

2. Training specialists conduct training—

   a. in more formal, large companies with over 100 employees.
   b. in more informal, small companies of less than 20 employees.
   c. on a one-to-one basis in a classroom setting.
   d. all of the above.

3. Most training for persons just hired is provided through—

   a. demonstrations in a class setting only.
   b. demonstrations at the job site only.
   c. verbal instructions.
   d. printed manuals or books.

4. As a general rule, when more formal training takes place at a work site—

   a. lower wages are paid.
   b. the length of employment of new employees is shorter.
   c. it is easier to learn the job.
   d. all of the above.

5. "Job hopping" from job to job occurs most frequently in a business that—

   a. invests time and money into a good training program.
   b. offers more classroom-based training.
   c. offers more random, informal training.
   d. offers only formal training.

6. As a new employee, you have a right to—

   a. be given a clear description of your roles.
   b. know your performance criteria.
   c. know your starting wage.
   d. all of the above.

7. When a company invests very little training and resources in a new employee, that new employee in turn—

   a. has a greater tendency to job hop.
   b. invests very little in terms of loyalty and responsibility to the company.
   c. probably receives a low wage.
   d. all of the above.

8. Most training activities for young workers last—

   a. less than 5 minutes.
   b. between 6 and 30 minutes.
   c. between 31 and 60 minutes.
   d. more than 60 minutes.

9. Young workers are evaluated most often by a—

   a. manager.
   b. supervisor.
   c. training specialist.
   d. co-worker.

10. Most evaluations of young workers occur—

   a. nonverbally.
   b. through comments.
   c. through informal meetings.
   d. through grades.

When you are finished, check your answers with the answers given on the next page. Some of the answers may surprise you.

Answers

1. b. In most jobs, you will be trai ed by your co-workers more often than by your supervisor. Although the supervisor may train you on the first day, you will receive more of your training from co-workers over the first 6 months of work.

2. a. Training specialists conduct training in large companies with over 100 employees. Managers, supervisors, or co-workers conduct training in smaller companies.

3. c. Most training occurs through verbal instructions. A new employee is simply told what to do.

4. d. In jobs that use informal training most often you will find the following to be true:

   - Wages are usually lower.
   - Young workers stay for less time.
   - The job requires little training.

5. c. Job hopping occurs most frequently at businesses that offer random, informal training. Businesses that invest more in training tend to employ new hires for longer periods of time.

6. d. As a new employee, you have a right to know what your job duties are and how you will be evaluated. You should also know what your starting wage is and how often you will be paid.

7. d. Generally, young workers job hop among jobs that pay low wages. Those companies that invest very little in new employees, in turn, receive very little loyalty.

8. a. Training episodes are usually very short. Most take less than 5 minutes.

9. b. Young workers are evaluated most often by their supervisors. Co-workers rarely evaluate performance. But, sometimes a co-worker with seniority is asked to provide input.

10. a. Most evaluations are completed nonverbally. The supervisor watches a new employee do the job. If things are going well, the supervisor will not comment. If the employee is making mistakes, more training is provided.

Concept 10
Knowing How Training Occurs

Formal Method

As you have learned, some training is given by training specialists. This is a formal method of training. It is used mostly in large companies that employ over 100 people. This method is efficiently used where a number of people are being trained for the same task. For example, large grocery chains frequently use this method. They hire training specialists to train all the cashiers from several stores. In this way, the company can ensure that the training is comprehensive and consistent. In other words, all cashiers will learn the same facts about the correct way to do the job.

Case Study: Betty

Betty is a 19-year-old phone representative at a bank. She answers customers' questions about their checking and savings accounts. She uses a computer to look up the information. Betty knows about all the different types of accounts that the bank offers. She also knows how to fill out all the forms. When Betty started at the bank, she was given a 21-day course. The course was given by a training specialist at the bank. In this course, Betty learned about (1) bank policies, (2) ways to fill out the various forms, and (3) the proper way to use the computer. She also learned how to (4) give an account balance to a customer, (5) close an account, and (6) stop payment on a check. Betty describes her training class by saying:

> We (the new hires) were all in a separate room by ourselves with a teacher. She handed us manuals the first day—these huge, big black manuals and a couple of other little books. We slowly went through the books and learned everything. We had a test when we came in in the

morning and then reviewed the materials for the next test. . . . It was just like school really.

During training, all the new employees sat around a big conference table. Debbie, the training specialist, used charts and handouts in her teaching. The trainees practiced filling out the bank forms. They practiced using the computer to find a balance for a customer. They also used the computer to find out which checks the bank had paid and which checks had bounced. The trainees watched and listened to phone representatives taking customer calls. They learned by watching the experienced phone representatives do their jobs. They could ask Debbie any questions they had about the jobs they were learning to do.

Betty had homework every night. She had to study to learn about her job. "I love studying," she said. "I like to learn so it was pretty neat for me. The training was basically school. I thought $3.75 an hour to learn was good."

Betty had to take a test every day. If she did not pass the test, she could lose her job. The bank would not keep anyone who did not learn how to do the job properly. Betty studied hard. She passed her tests and became a phone representative.

"I thought $3.75 an hour to learn was good."

Questions

How was Betty's training different from the education one receives in school? How was it similar?

What was the advantage of being trained by a specialist over being trained by a co-worker?

Why do you think the company decided to hire a specialist to train its workers? Why didn't they let the workers learn from each other? What is the danger in having co-workers train new workers?

Focus: Sometimes One Way Is Best

Some companies spend a lot of time and money on training. They try to find the best, most efficient way to do a job. Then, they make sure that the workers also know and use that method of getting the job done.

The bank that employed Betty wanted to make sure Betty learned only one way to do the tasks—the right way. So, the bank hired a specialist to train the workers. This formal method of training told Betty that this learning was serious business! Betty's impression was verified when she learned that she and the other trainees would be given a test every morning.

Debbie, the training specialist, used a variety of training tools. She used charts, books, observations, the computer, and tests

to help the employees learn the job. The bank spent a lot of money to provide training to its new employees. But they expected to be repaid. They expected workers who could do things correctly—without making costly errors.

Unfortunately, most sites where young workers get jobs do not have training specialists. In a recent study, training methods were observed at 46 work sites. Of the 46 companies, only 4 had a training specialist who organized the training program. Your chances of finding a job with a formal training program are slim. However, if you get a job in a large department store, grocery chain, bank, or factory, you may encounter a training specialist. If you do, you will probably encounter—

- a more thorough introduction to the job setting,
- a description of the benefits and salary that you will receive,
- some specific instructions about how you should do your job, and
- a description of how you will be evaluated.

Activities

Conduct the following two studies:

Study No. 1

- Select five classmates to participate.
- Tell each classmate to write a letter to the Vory Company, 1910 Vine Street, Chicago, Illinois. Have each classmate ask for 15 copies of the free brochure entitled "Ways to be a Leader." Answer questions as classmates ask them.
- Collect a letter from each of the five classmates.
- Now, look at the letters. Are they all the same? Did all five classmates put the date at the top of the letter, include the receiver's address above the salutation, include a salutation, write one paragraph, use the same closing (Yours truly, Sincerely, etc.), and sign the letter?
- Estimate the total time you spent in training.

Study No. 2

- Select another five classmates.
- Prepare a list of instructions to give all five classmates on how to write the letter. Write these instructions on a sheet of paper.
- Then, gather the classmates in a group for training. Explain to all of them at the same time what you expect them to do. Answer all questions in front of all the trainees.
- Collect the letters when the group is finished.
- Now, look at the letters. Are they all the same? How do they differ? What would you do differently in your next training session to eliminate those differences?
- How much time did you spend training?

Write a brief report on your findings. Decide the benefits of formalized training. Consider the resulting quality of work and the cost of training in terms of time.

Visit several businesses in the community. Find out how each company provides training. Learn the kinds of jobs for which each type of training is given. Ask the employers to tell you why they have selected the training method they use. Then, write a report about your findings.

Random Method

Random training is just that—training given at random, as needed. It follows no organized pattern. It is provided only when the new worker asks for it. Or, it occurs when the employer or co-workers notice that a new worker is not doing a job correctly and must be corrected.

The as-needed training method is used when the employer assumes that someone else will help the worker. It reflects the casual attitude that "sooner or later the worker will learn the job."

Case Study: John

John is a new employee at a roller skating rink. He works in the coat room, checks out rental skates, and cleans the rink. John works with five other workers and Diane, the manager. Diane tells John what to do during his shift.

During John's first night, Diane said, "Guess who's cleaning the toilets and who's sweeping the rug?" She held up a roll of toilet paper and a bowl brush. John said, "Yes, but I'm new at this job." Diane remarked, "Yes, John, but a toilet is a toilet." John continued to sweep the floor. He asked Diane, "What about the floor around the rugs?" Diane told John, "I want it all done." When John finished, he asked Diane where he could find the keys to the storage cabinet. Diane said, "Where we usually keep them." John asked the same question of a co-worker a few minutes later. After he was told, John put the supplies and keys away.

Later, John tells a friend about his job. He says that he is not sure how busy he should look when he works in the coat room or when he gives out skates. John also admits that he has started to avoid Diane. When he sees her coming, he ducks behind a coat rack.

"Yes, John, but a toilet is a toilet."

Questions

What problems is John having in learning his job? What could he do to improve the situation?

What is lacking in Diane's method of training John? What difficulties does this present? How could Diane improve her training technique?

Focus: Random Can Be Risky!

Most adolescent workers in our study did not have a structured training program. In fact, John's training experience was typical of the work sites. John was simply told what to do by either a manager or a co-worker.

This loose method of training caused problems. John didn't have a clear idea of what he was to do. Diane gave him a new task almost every time she saw him. Thus, John quickly decided to avoid Diane—and therefore more work. John didn't develop a feeling of responsibility about his job. He didn't know what responsibilities were his.

Many new employees receive directions or training on this as-needed basis. Sometimes this is fine. For example, Betty had a question she could not answer when she was on the phone with a customer at the bank. So, she asked a co-worker. Here is what happened:

> Betty takes a complicated call about a veteran's check. She gets up and tells a co-worker, "I don't know what to do about it." The woman replies, "Tell him to call the Veterans' Administration." Betty tells the man and gives him the number. The man says "Okay."

Betty learned how to refer calls about veteran's checks by going to a co-worker for help. This is very common. Much training occurs when new workers ask questions.

The most effective training, however, occurs when work sites use several different training methods. Betty received training from a specialist. She also received verbal directions from her peers. The more training methods used, the better the training program. You profit when an employer invests more time, resources, and staff in your training program. Also, you will generally receive a higher wage.

Activities

Think of a job you have had. It might be a paid job or a volunteer job. Pretend you have been asked to train a new worker to do the same job you did. Write a report on how you would do the training. Or, role-play the situation just described.

Act out the part of John in the situation with Diane. Ask another student to role-play Diane. Ask two other students to be reviewers and to watch the role-play scene. In the scene, demonstrate how you, as John, could get a complete list of what you need to know about your job. Then, role-play Diane. Demonstrate how you could do a better job of training. Ask the reviewers to comment.

Enter into a discussion with several classmates. Give examples of experiences you have had in giving or receiving random training. Explain why the training was or was not effective.

Informal but Structured Method

Much training on the job is provided by other workers. Ideally, these workers know the job well. They can explain what you are to do and show you how to do it.

Case Study: Ray

Ray is a mail room employee in a very large bank. On his first day at work, Ray attended a morning training session. There he received an overview of the bank's policies. A training specialist explained the salary ranges, the employee benefits, and the evaluation criteria. Then, Ray reported to his manager in the mail room. The manager asked Bill, a 20-year-old co-worker, to show Ray how to run the mail meter machine.

Bill explained how to use the machine. He showed Ray where to locate the keyboard, the scale, and the printer. Bill placed a thick package on the scale and the cost of the stamp was shown on the video display. After Bill pushed the print button, the machine printed a postage label. Bill tore off the label and stuck it onto the package. Then he told Ray that "packages larger than 3/4 inch thick go into this bag." Bill pointed to a large mail bag. "Smaller packages go into this bag," Bill said as he placed the package into the bag. Then, Bill asked Ray to run the mail meter machine while he watched.

Ray is a mail room employee in a very large bank.

Questions

What are the benefits of learning through demonstrations?

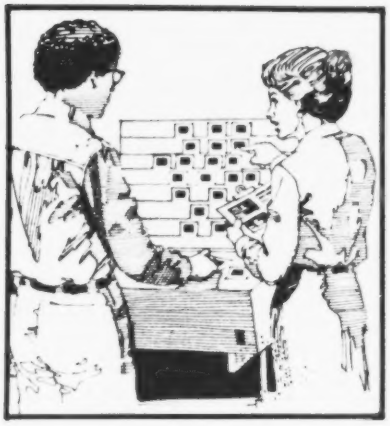
What is appealing about learning through demonstration?

In what types of jobs do you think demonstrations should be required?

Focus: Follow the Leader

Many tasks are learned by watching what others do. Ray learned how to use the mail meter machine through a demonstration. Bill showed Ray exactly how to operate the machine. He combined verbal instructions with a demonstration.

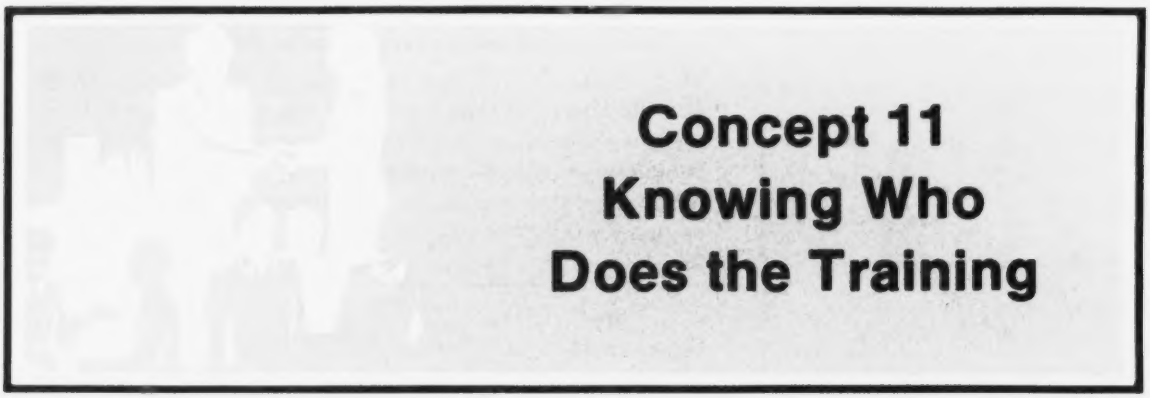
You will most likely be trained through demonstrations in work sites that have many machines. This is true in fast-food restaurants and health spas. Sometimes, it is easier to show a new worker how to use a machine than it is to explain its proper use.



Activity

Pick an activity from the following list. Decide the best way to teach another student or group of students how to complete the activity. Decide what teaching tools you will use. Select tools such as charts, books, demonstrations, and so forth. Then, train the student(s) to do the activity.

- Train a classmate to be a tour guide. Explain how you want the tour conducted and the information you want the guide to give to the people touring.
- Train three students to lead a school cheer.
- Teach the new football defense pattern to a student enacting the role of a football player who missed yesterday's practice.
- Teach a classmate how to use the copying machine.



Concept 11
Knowing Who Does the Training

Training by Co-workers

Co-workers are responsible for almost 50 percent of all training for young workers. Managers and supervisors are responsible for the same percentage of training. Only a very small percentage of training for young workers is provided by training specialists.

When you are hired for a job, you will probably receive at least some of your training from a co-worker. There are many benefits to this type of leadership. Your co-workers are usually doing the same job you will be doing. Or, they have done that job successfully in the past. They know where they have made errors and can tell you how to avoid them. They can give you tips on how to do a job in a better or faster way. Because they are usually working with you, co-workers are available when you have questions to ask.

Managers like to have co-workers train new workers when possible. Then the managers don't have to spend so much of their time training.

Case Study: Jerry

Jerry is a 20-year-old materials handler who works in a large factory. Jerry packs boxes. Then he takes the boxes to the sealing area. After sealing the boxes, Jerry stacks them for the warehouse. He handles about 550 boxes a night.

The manager would have trained Jerry himself but he was just too busy.

Jerry described how he was trained. He said, "Well, they took me down the aisle where I was going to work. I watched Tim, a co-worker, twice. Then I started doing the job. Tim just watched."

Next, we talked to Jerry's foreman. He said he asked Tim to show Jerry how to pack and seal the boxes. He said, "I did this because Tim is a good worker who used to do Jerry's job." The manager would have trained Jerry himself, but he was just too busy.

Questions

Who was responsible for Jerry's training? Who actually trained Jerry to do his job?

Why did the manager select Tim to train Jerry?

Why is a competent co-worker the best trainer for this type of job?

What are the risks if the co-worker who is training is not competent?

Focus: There Are Benefits When the Trainer Is Good

Much of the training provided by co-workers is supervised by a manager. In this case, Jerry's manager asked Tim to show Jerry how to do the job. He knew that Tim could train Jerry to do this job.

Tim used demonstration as his primary teaching tool. Because the task was simple, Jerry could easily learn by watching what Tim did. After the two demonstrations, Tim watched Jerry. He watched to see if Jerry was doing the task correctly. During the observation, Tim could have corrected Jerry at any point if necessary. And, Jerry could have asked Tim any questions he may have had.

It is very common for a young worker to ask questions of a co-wo[illegible]. You saw an example of this earlier when Betty asked a co-worker how to handle the customer with the veteran's check. Betty's co-worker told her what to do. Co-workers help train new employees in this way at many work sites. You will find that you can learn a great deal from your co-workers.

Activities

Write a paragraph describing how Tim trained Jerry for the job. Explain why the techniques Tim used were good ones for this type of job.

List at least five jobs you have had where you learned by watching other workers. Consider jobs you have had at school, at home, or in the community.

List who trained you for each job, for example, a brother, a friend, another volunteer, and so forth.

List the skills you think a trainer should have.

Write four reasons why competent co-workers are good trainers.

List four instances when a co-worker might be a poor trainer.

Training by Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors, like co-workers, provide about 50 percent of the training given to new, young employees. Managers usually train new workers on the first days of their employment. They show the workers what they want done and how the workers should do the tasks. They correct workers when something is done incorrectly. Once a worker seems to know the job, the manager stops training.

Supervisors usually begin where the managers leave off. Supervisors observe workers regularly as they perform on the job. They monitor each worker's progress over the weeks and months of employment. They offer continued instruction and training as it is needed.

Case Study: Cindy

Cindy started working at a fast-food restaurant in a busy section of the city. She was trained by the floor manager, Tom, on her first day at work.

First, Tom took Cindy to the salad bar. He began to explain the names and arrangements of the various salad bar items. Cindy listened as he advised her to be "clean and quick in refilling the salad bar."

Cindy watched Tom fill trays and wipe the counter. She watched as he got the tomatoes, lettuce, and bacon bits from the back room. As he worked, Tom told Cindy how to perform the various tasks. He told her to stay out of the way of customers, to keep the salad bar clean, and to stay busy. For the next several trips, Cindy followed Tom to the back and returned with supplies. After the fifth trip, Tom returned to his job. He left Cindy to work the salad bar alone.

Cindy listened as Tom advised her.

Questions

What training techniques did the manager use to train Cindy?

What was good about the training session? What was poor?

How could Tom have improved the training he gave Cindy?

Focus: Managers Know What They Want

Tom, like many managers, became closely involved in training during the first days of Cindy's employment. He told Cindy what to do. He told her to "watch the salad bar carefully, stay out of the way of customers, keep the place clean, and stay busy."

Tom would check the salad bar throughout the evening. He would see if any salad dressing was spilled or if any canisters were empty. If so, he would point them out to Cindy. Once Tom stopped finding things wrong, he checked the salad bar less often. He became confident that Cindy was doing the job according to his standards.

Activities

Select five local businesses to visit. Ask the manager at each business to tell you who trains the new employees. Learn how the training is given—on the job or in a training session. Learn what training tools are used: demonstrations, textbooks, posters, videotapes, and so forth. Write a report of your findings.

Find one manager who gives training to new workers. Learn why that manager does the training. Find out why that manager doesn't ask the new employee's co-worker to do it. Report on the case to your class. Point out why you think the person giving the training is the best (or not the best) one for the job.

Training by Others

Training specialists provide very little training to young employees. Does that mean that co-workers, managers, and supervisors are the only other people a new employee might look to for training?

Not really. Many new, young employees will accept help from whomever is willing to offer it.

Case Study: Laurie

Laurie worked in a health spa as an exercise instructor. She showed clients how to use the exercise equipment. She was trained as an instructor by two co-workers, Terry and Hally. These two co-workers showed Laurie how to use the machines. They gave her one quick demonstration of each machine. During his second week on the job, Laurie was showing a client how to use one of the machines. Another client came over and said, "Let me help you out a little bit." Then he explained how to use the machine. Laurie kept asking this client questions. She learned how to use some of the machines from him.

They gave her one quick demonstration of each machine.

Questions

Do you think Laurie was right to continue to ask the client questions? Why or why not?

What do you think the manager of the health spa would have said or done if he saw a client training Laurie on some of the exercise machines?

What was the danger in Laurie's learning from the client?

Focus: Make Sure You Ask the Right People

Laurie never truly understood the proper use of the machines. Therefore, when a client offered some help, Laurie gladly accepted.

When you start a new job, ask your manager whom you should go to if you have questions. Find out if it is okay to ask a co-worker. Find out which co-workers you should ask. Your manager may prefer that you ask only certain workers. Make sure you know what to do if these people are busy when you have a question that can't wait.

When you need help, seek only the people you have been told to approach. There is a real danger in accepting advice from someone who has not been approved. The information you get could be wrong. And in some cases, it could result in a client's getting injured.

Activities

Write a description of how you would design a good training program for a health spa that hires many young workers.

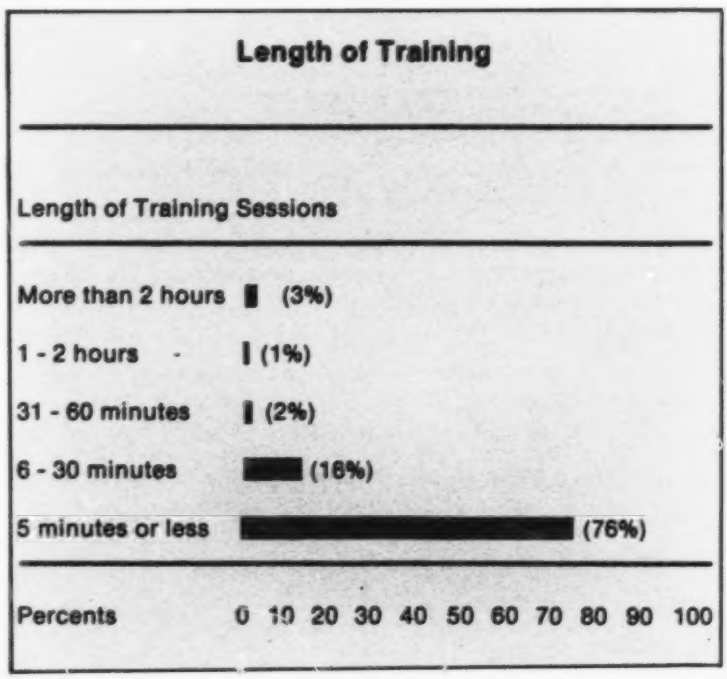
Role-play ways you would approach a manager to ask a question. What would you do if the manager was talking with another person? Role-play how you would interrupt.

Act out what you would say to a client who offers advice when you are teaching another client.

Concept 12
Knowing How Long Training Lasts

Adolescent training at the work site is given in very short periods of time. In fact, over 76 percent of the 119 training sessions observed lasted less than 5 minutes. See the following figure.

Length of Training


Length of Training Sessions
More than 2 hours (3%)
1 - 2 hours (1%)
31 - 60 minutes (2%)
6 - 30 minutes (16%)
5 minutes or less (76%)
Percents
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

As the figure shows, you will probably have many short training sessions. Many of the cases you have read are examples of training that took less than 5 minutes. For example, when Betty

asked her co-worker about the veteran's check, the incident took less than 2 minutes.

Case Study: Al

Larry returns and watches Al silently.

Al is an 18-year-old high school graduate who is beginning work in a sheet metal shop. Al took sheet metal courses in high school. He knows how to use a lot of the machinery in the shop.

Al talks with his supervisor, Larry, about an order. He says, "The customer needs fifty 8- by 10-foot pieces of metal cut to these specifications." As he speaks, Larry hands Al a paper with the order specifications. Larry and Al walk over to the shears. Larry demonstrates how to use them on this job and leaves. Al begins work. Larry returns and watches silently. He stays a few minutes and then returns to his work.

Questions

How did Larry train Al during the short training episode?

Why did Larry return and silently watch Al cut the sheet metal?

Focus: Short Is Common

Training given to most new workers is short. Sometimes this is because the work the new workers are asked to do is not complicated. Sometimes it is because the workers already know the job skills and tasks required.

Al had previous training in vocational classes. He knew how to use the equipment. So, Larry could demonstrate how to use the shop's shears in a matter of minutes. He knew Al would understand.

Many entry-level jobs do not require much training. They can be learned very quickly. For example, Cindy's job in the salad bar could be learned in less than 30 minutes.

Short training sessions are usually conducted by either a co-worker, a supervisor, or a manager. When training specialists are involved, training usually takes longer than an hour. Very few training periods last longer than an hour.

Activities

List three reasons why so few adolescent workers encounter a training specialist on their jobs.

Choose a short training incident that you have encountered at home, on the job, or in school. Role-play this incident with a peer for the class. Ask the rest of the class to time you. Then watch the person you trained as he or she does what you taught. Did you do a good job of teaching? Would more time have helped?

Concept 13
Knowing How You Will be Evaluated

The Warning

As students, you know about being evaluated. You take tests, write papers, and participate in class discussions. You earn a term or quarter grade every 6-9 weeks. During the grading period, teachers comment on your papers and assignments. You usually know how you are doing. The evaluation process is clear.

As workers, the rules of evaluation can change. About half of the time, evaluations at a work site are nonverbal. Your supervisors will watch you as you work. This way they can tell if you are doing a good job. At times, a supervisor may comment on your performance, especially if you are making many mistakes.

The following case study shows what can happen when your manager is not happy with your job performance.

Case Study: Charles

When he was 19, Charles worked in a sheet metal shop. He earned $3.50 an hour. But, Charles made many, many errors. George, Charles's manager, called a meeting and said, "Charles, what would you do if you hired someone to cut grass and he cut it the wrong length?" Charles asked if George was telling him he was fired. George said, "No." However, he did put Charles on probation. George and Charles agreed to meet again in 1 week to discuss Charles's performance. Charles

stopped making measurement errors, but he missed several days of work without good reason. Charles was fired.

Charles was fired.

Questions

When Charles was put on probation, how should he have changed his behavior?

What was the manager telling Charles when he put him on probation? What did he want to know about Charles's attitude and behaviors?

What is the difference between the way Charles was evaluated on the job and the way you are evaluated at school?

Focus: Response to Reprimands

Listen when your manager or supervisor talks to you about weaknesses in your performance. You need to be very careful that you do not continue to make mistakes. Charles's manager was concerned about the number of mistakes Charles was making. So he told Charles. When Charles found out that he was being put on probation, he tried to improve. At first, he made fewer mistakes. However, Charles missed several days of work during each of the next few weeks, without giving a good reason. So, even though Charles stopped making so many mistakes, he was fired. He did not behave in a responsible way. The manager said he was not a dependable worker.

When a manager talks with you about your poor performance, consider yourself on probation. Probation means that your job is on the line. If you continue to make mistakes or perform poorly, you will be fired.

Activities

Write a short essay describing what you feel are the most important characteristics of a dependable worker.

Assume that you have been working as a binder in a print shop. Role play a scene with your manager where you are told your work has been sloppy. Demonstrate what you would say and do in response to the manager.

List five actions you would take to show a manager you are responsible.

Evaluation Criteria

You can increase your chances of getting a good performance evaluation by knowing exactly how you will be evaluated. You can ask your manager to show you a copy of the evaluation form. You can also ask what factors the manager feels are most important.

By finding out how you will be evaluated, you can prepare for the evaluation. By getting a good evaluation, you can move up the pay scale. You may even get promoted to a higher position.

Case Study: Charles

He didn't understand why he was dismissed.

Charles was relieved when the manager told him he was not being fired. He felt that being put on probation wasn't so bad. It meant he was being given a second chance. Now he would try to make fewer mistakes.

Charles was upset when the manager fired him because of absences. He thought his work had improved. He didn't understand why he was dismissed when he was making fewer mistakes.

Questions

Did Charles know how he was going to be evaluated? Did he know the criteria?

Why is it important to know the criteria for your evaluation?

How would knowing the criteria have helped Charles? Do you think he would have gotten fired? Why or why not?

Focus: Know the Checkpoints

Some work sites do conduct regular performance evaluations. Large companies probably have a standardized evaluation form. However, smaller companies that are owned and operated by the same person will probably evaluate more informally.

Know your checkpoints. Know what parts of your performance or behavior will be checked. Know how regularly these checks will occur. Work toward improving your habits each day.

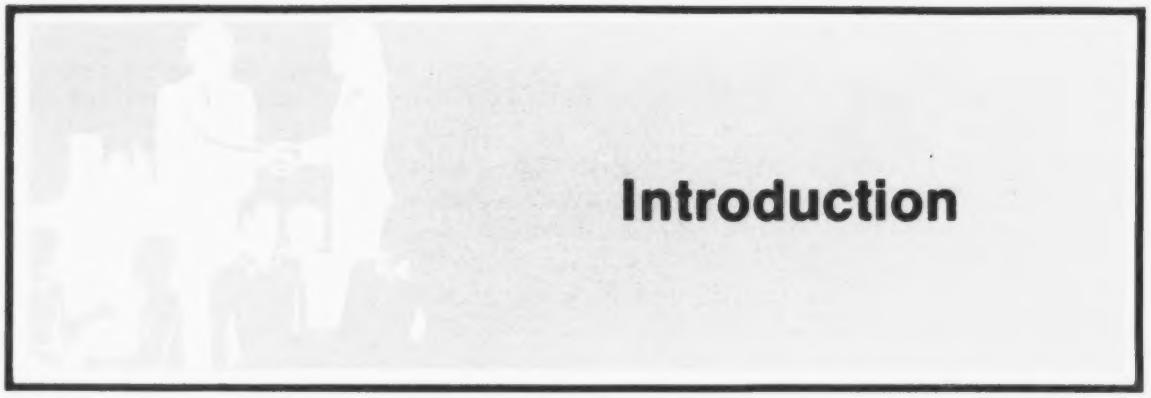
Your performance evaluation may be used to determine your salary increases. If you want to get a good raise, it's important that you perform at your very highest level.

Activities

Assume that you have just been offered a position as a mail clerk for a bank. Act out a scene with your manager in which you ask how you will be evaluated. Role play how you will learn what that manager feels is most important in a worker.

Think of a job you are doing. Make a list of parts of your job performance that should be evaluated. Record how often you think you should be evaluated. Then, assume those are the checkpoints for a real evaluation. Work to receive a good evaluation. See if you try harder to do well.

Section 4
Leaving a Job



Introduction

The decision or need to leave a job occurs for several reasons: Either the employer is dissatisfied with the employee's job performance, the employee is dissatisfied with the job conditions, or both are dissatisfied with the match.

Employees usually become dissatisfied because something has gone wrong in the process of (1) getting a job, (2) becoming an insider, and (3) learning at the work site. Following are some common causes of employee dissatisfaction:

- Some employees find that they have selected jobs that do not meet their needs. They may feel the jobs are not interesting, challenging, or desirable because of location, work hours, and tasks.
- Some employees feel that they don't fit in with the other workers. They may not like their co-workers or their co-workers' behaviors. They may know how to fit in but have decided they don't want to adapt to the expected behavior.
- Some employees believe that they are not receiving good leadership. They may feel that their tasks are not clearly outlined and are therefore confusing to them. They may feel that the training they are receiving is poor and that they are not learning new skills.

Employers become dissatisfied with workers for the same reasons: Something went wrong in the process of worker (1) selection, (2) orientation, and (3) training. Some reasons for employer dissatisfaction with new workers are as follows:

- Employers find that they have hired some workers who are not motivated. The workers don't care about the work so they do a poor job. They are not responsible. They have not decided that work is a priority in their lives.
- Employers find that some workers don't get along with other workers on the job. The bad attitude of these workers makes them a poor investment. They reduce the enthusiasm, satisfaction, and productivity of the other workers.

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- Employers find that some workers are poor learners. They don't listen to instructions. They don't watch other workers to learn how to do the job correctly. Such workers want to do things their own way—and that way is often incorrect.

Whether leaving the job is your choice or your employer's choice, the way you leave is important. It will affect your work record. It will have an effect on your ability to get hired by another employer.

Concept 14
Exploring Reasons Why People Are Fired

Being fired for any reason—absences, carelessness, dishonesty, inability to do the job—is likely to limit your chances for getting hired by another employer. Hiring employers usually ask for references. References help employers learn about an applicant's skills, attitude, and behavior on the job. If you leave a job gracefully, your employer will be more likely to pass along good comments about you.

The following case studies show why and how various workers were fired. As you read the episodes, think about how each worker might have left the job more gracefully.

Case Study: Charles

Charles, a 19-year-old, was an average student in a large public high school. He was enrolled in the vocational education program during his junior and senior years. There he learned skills to become a sheet metal worker. After graduation, Charles landed a full-time job in a sheet metal shop as a shop hand. He earned $3.50 per hour at the job.

After he had been working for a time, Charles's foreman reported that Charles's performance was poor. He said that Charles pulled the wrong sheets of metal, worked too fast, and cut the metal the wrong size. Charles also dressed sloppily and was absent from work too many times, the foreman said.

George, Charles's manager, called Charles into his office. He asked, "What would you do if you had a friend who always cut the grass too short and he worked for you in your grounds-keeping business?" Charles replied suspiciously, "Am I being

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fired?" The manager said, "No, you are not." Charles then answered the question, saying he would give his friend a second chance. He attempted to explain his poor work performance. "I am not used to how you cut metal in this shop. It's different from the way we did it in the sheet metal class in high school." On the strength of this conversation, George gave Charles a week's probation to improve his performance and attitude. He set up a follow-up meeting for the next week.

One week later, Charles and George met again. They discussed Charles's performance. George said that Charles's work was "not too bad." Charles stated that his work would certainly improve if he received a raise. George was surprised. He asked Charles what he thought would be a fair salary for the amount of work he was doing. Charles replied, "Six to eight dollars an hour." George pointed out that the shop foreman, who had been there for 15 years, made only that much. Charles answered, "I work as hard as the foreman. I produce the same amount of cut metal as he does, too." George dismissed Charles from the meeting. He told him that he could stay on the job.

Charles was arrested on a charge of driving while intoxicated.

The next week, Charles was arrested on a charge of driving while intoxicated (DWI) and speeding. Charles missed a day of work for the court appearance. Later, he would have to miss 3 days more for the jail sentence. Charles was late to work another day that week.

The next week, Charles missed 2 days of work without calling to say he would be absent. On the third day, he called in sick. Charles said he had hurt his knee on the job.

George, the manager, responded by telling Charles that he was fired. He said that Charles had had too many absences from work. He also said that Charles was still making too many mistakes on the job.

Charles was very upset and confused about getting fired. "I don't understand why I was fired; I'm a good worker," he said.

Questions

Did Charles ever understand that he was in danger of losing his job? When? What did Charles do to avoid being fired?

What did Charles do that led to his getting fired?

Why should Charles have avoided asking for a raise at this time? What does Charles's asking for a raise tell you about Charles? Do you think Charles realized he was close to being fired?

How could the manager, George, have helped Charles understand what was expected of him?

What could Charles have done differently to improve his behavior and performance on the job?

If Charles was unhappy in the job, how could he have left more gracefully?

Focus: Are You Getting the Message?

Charles's case study illustrates one of the major reasons why people are fired from jobs. Charles did not know what was expected of him. He assumed that what he was doing was acceptable. For example, Charles's quick and sloppy work was seen by the manager as indicating a lack of interest in the job. Charles saw his quick work as showing a desire to get the job done fast. The two never talked to each other about this. Charles was viewed as too competitive and careless. He was seen as a sloppy dresser and as immature. Charles, however, did not see himself this way. He had an unrealistic view of himself.

It is not easy to see yourself as others see you. One way to learn what others think of you is to ask. Charles didn't ask how he could improve. He merely defended his behavior.

When you are working, you need to know what the employer expects of you. You need to know the answers to such questions as the following:

- What behavior will and won't be tolerated?
- What are or aren't you allowed to do?
- What is the company's attendance policy?
- How are you penalized for being late to work?
- Who are you to notify if you are sick?
- When are you to call in when you are sick?
- Who should you ask if you have questions about your job?
- What are the dress rules?

If you are having trouble with job tasks, talk it over with your employer. Explain what is difficult for you. Make sure you try. Also, tell the employer that you are trying. Then, if you must be fired, you will leave with good feelings between you and the employer. The employer will be able to say that you are responsible and that you try hard. Your weaker skills may not be required at the next job you seek.

Activities

Discuss instances in which you had trouble on the job because expectations were not clearly defined. List some things you could have done or did do to learn what your employer wanted of you.

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Role-play Charles in the first meeting between George and Charles. Demonstrate how Charles should have acted and what he should have said in this meeting.

Write a case study in which Charles quits before he is fired. Write it so that Charles leaves the job in a positive way. Read your case study to the rest of the class. Ask your classmates to comment on it.

Case Study: Karen

Karen admitted that she had lied.

Karen, a 19-year-old, also graduated from a large public high school. She took a general course of study and was mainly a C student. Several months after graduating from high school, Karen arrived for a job interview at a health spa. She was ready to go to work. And, that is exactly what she was asked to do.

On the first day, Karen was handed a 12-page packet of information about the job. It included a contract, a list of company policies, a page on personal conduct, and other forms. She was put to work so quickly that she didn't have a chance to read the material. When asked about it later, Karen said she didn't even remember getting it. "They told me to go ahead and start work. They never told me about my job duties or anything. They stuck me at the receptionist's desk and told me what to do. They never gave me a set schedule or anything."

Karen's duties as receptionist were to check IDs, give out locker keys, answer the phone, explain spa policies to guests, and assign instructors to clients. Karen never fully understood the job.

About a month after Karen started, a new manager took over. Within several weeks, Karen was fired. The manager told her that he needed someone who was dependable. Karen felt she was unfairly fired for missing a day of work. She explained that she didn't appear for work because she didn't have a ride. But, she said she had arranged for a replacement.

Mark, Karen's manager, had a different interpretation of Karen's dismissal. He said that Karen was fired for not being dependable, for lying, and for "her mouth." (He said she used flip, coarse language with co-workers and customers.) "Karen was absent from work too many times," said Mark. "And, she lied about why she missed a day of work."

A co-worker had told Mark that she thought Karen was in court on the day she was absent. When Mark asked Karen about this, she also said that she had been in court. However, when asked for written proof, Karen admitted that she had lied. Mark had no choice but to fire Karen.

Questions

What are the problems with how Karen began work at the spa? How would you have felt in her position? What could you have done to try to improve the situation?

Why do you think Karen lost her job?

Was Karen's lying the only reason she was fired or was it just "the last straw?" Explain the reason for your answer.

Focus: What Is the Last Straw?

Lying is a big mistake! Employers may overlook the fact that a worker is slow or makes a few errors. They may even overlook an employee's lateness to work as long as it doesn't happen often. In fact, employers tolerate many negative behaviors if they think a worker is trying. One thing employers do not overlook is lying.

Lying is a behavior that tends to be repeated. Most employers feel that if you lie about one thing, you will probably lie about others.

In a recent study of employer standards, employers were asked the following question: "How would you be influenced by an employee who put more hours on the time sheet than he or she actually worked?"

Of the employers questioned, 38 percent said they would fire the worker immediately. Ten percent said they would suspend the worker. Thirty-four percent said they would warn the worker. Sixteen percent said they would discuss it immediately. Two percent percent said they would discuss it if it continues. None said they would ignore it.

See the chart on the next page.

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Put more hours on the time sheet than actually worked	Percent of employers
Ignore it	0%
Discuss it if it continues	2%
Discuss it immediately	16%
Warn the worker	34%
Suspend the worker	10%
Fire the worker	38%

Activities

Write an analysis of Karen's work experience at the health spa. Explain how she could have changed her behavior to avoid being fired.

Interview three local employers. Ask them how they would react if they learned an employee had lied to them. Find out if they would react differently if the person lying was a good worker or a poor worker. Ask if they would feel differently about a person whose lie involves money rather than time or behavior. Find out why employers answered each question as they did. Report to the class.

Think of a situation in your life when lying was the "last straw." Explain why you felt this way.

Case Study: Karen

About a month after leaving the health spa, Karen applied for a front desk job at a motel. The position was filled. However, they offered Karen a position in housekeeping. She took it because she needed the work. After working a few days, Karen was asked to work the desk part-time. She enjoyed the receptionist work but not the housekeeping. Shortly afterwards, Karen was given the desk job full-time. She talked comfortably with customers and seemed to enjoy doing the job. However, Karen

wasn't careful in working with money. She did not count change correctly.

One day, the manager told Karen that she had not been asking if people wanted rooms for smokers or nonsmokers. After he left, Karen neglected to ask the next three customers.

After 3 months, Karen was fired. The manager said that she was not learning correct desk procedures quickly enough. Most recently, she had accepted a bad credit card. Karen's manager had given her numerous verbal and written warnings about poor performance. Although she was punctual, reliable, and likable, the manager felt that Karen lacked the motivation to do a top-notch job.

Karen was not surprised at being fired.

She wasn't careful in working with money.

Questions

What did Karen learn from her experience at the health spa to help her in this job?

Why was Karen not surprised at being fired?

Do you think Karen really cared about her job? Why or why not?

What did Karen like most about her job?

What is bad about getting fired, even if you do get rehired? What will happen if you don't change your behavior?

Focus: Why Are People Careless?

Karen took the job at the motel because she needed the work. Reasons for wanting a job are important. They often affect the kind of job a person seeks. Furthermore, they influence how a person performs on the job, as is seen in Karen's case study.

Karen's disinterest in the job showed. Her lack of interest was reflected by the careless way in which she performed her tasks.

If you find yourself becoming careless, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the work interesting to me?
- What is boring to me?
- What could make this job more interesting?
- Do I need to seek another job?

Activities

List at least five reasons why people are careless in what they do.

Write a paragraph explaining how Karen could have left this job gracefully. Explain what she could have said to her employer to ensure that he would give her a good reference.

Pretend you are Karen. What would you do before looking for another job? List your answers. How would you make sure you succeeded at the next job? Write a paragraph describing your plan.

Role-play a job interview with a prospective employer. How would you explain why you left your last job?

Case Study: Karen

Karen's supervisor told a different story.

About 5 weeks later, Karen found a job at an apartment complex. Her job was to show apartments and to do some secretarial work. Karen was only working about 12 hours per week on Saturdays and Sundays. She quit after 6 weeks. "I liked it, but I didn't get enough hours," she said.

Karen's supervisor told a different story. She said that even though Karen had received 2 weeks of training and knew her duties, she didn't do them. She wasn't motivated. One Friday she called in saying she couldn't work that weekend. The supervisor threatened to fire her. Although Karen did not work that weekend, she begged to be kept on. She was given another chance to work the next weekend.

Workers at the complex are checked periodically on weekends. When the top manager checked on Karen, she was reading a book. That was allowed, providing prospective customers were not neglected.

However, Karen was not helpful to the manager, whom she did not recognize, or to the other customers. She would tell them to look around themselves and then continue reading. When the manager observed how Karen dealt with the customers, she insisted that the supervisor fire Karen.

After being fired for the third time, Karen had trouble finding a new job. Two and one-half months later she was still looking.

Questions

What could happen if Karen tells a new employer that she quit her job when she was actually fired?

What will most likely happen if Karen is hired in another job? Explain your answer.

What patterns did Karen establish in her three jobs? How does this look on her work history?

Focus: Is There a Pattern to Certain Behaviors?

Karen didn't see that she was following the same pattern of behavior on each job. Or, if she saw, she didn't care. The consequences are sad. Now she is having trouble finding a job.

There are consequences for every decision you make. Maybe Karen didn't realize that she was making a decision to do a poor job. But she was. She didn't put forth the effort that was required to perform well and to keep a job. Karen was not motivated.

Activities

List the behaviors that Karen demonstrated on tne three jobs. Think of as many behaviors as you can, for example, carelessness, laziness, and so forth. Then, assemble in a group with four or five classmates. Compare your list with the lists of the other people in the group. Make one list that includes the behaviors noted on all the lists.

Karen might have been helped had she received proper training. However, she received little or no training at the first two jobs. Think about the importance of training to a new employee. Write a paragraph explaining how proper training can affect a worker's motivation.

With another student, play the roles of Karen and a career counselor. Discuss Karen's problems at work.

Case Study: Laurie

Laurie is a 19-year-old who is very personable and outgoing. She attended public schools and a career center where she received average grades. Laurie was enrolled in the drama program during her junior and senior years. She planned to find a job where she could use her drama training after she graduated. But, this didn't happen.

Laurie's first job was at a local health spa. After she quit this job, she applied for and was hired for a job in a day care center. Her job was to watch over a group of preschool and first-grade children. She was to organize their activities and assist the other teachers at the center. The position was full-time. It paid the minimum wage. The manager of the center, Sue, hired

Laurie for the job. She liked Laurie's outgoing personality. "This is just what we need for the job!" Sue said.

Laurie told Sue that she wanted to use her drama training on the job. She said she wanted to have the children act out skits that would help them learn important things. Sue saw that as "just great" when hiring Laurie for the job. She told Laurie that most of the other employees were college graduates or college seniors with backgrounds in child development. Laurie decided to take the job anyway. "It was a challenge. I liked it," said Laurie.

But the training did not go well.

Laurie was given on-the-job training and a probation period within which to learn her new job. But, the training did not go well. The children ignored her commands. Sue said, "The children were running the class. It was even showing on her face. . . . She didn't have control of the classroom."

Still, Laurie did not give up. She realized that she was having problems. She asked her co-workers and manager questions. She continually asked, "How do I improve my control and voice? How do I make the kids respect me? What else am I doing wrong?"

Sue continued to train, encourage, and supervise Laurie. She hoped Laurie would improve. However, it soon seemed obvious to Sue that Laurie "hadn't picked up the ball."

One day, a little girl under Laurie's care wandered off. She was missing for several hours. The child's father was very upset at Laurie's lack of attention and control. He complained to Sue, who fired Laurie a few days later.

"She just didn't have the background," said Sue.

Laurie was devastated at being fired. She thought the day care job was the perfect job for her. "But then, they didn't let me do what I wanted to do [the skits]," said Laurie. Still, Laurie thought her drama training would help her in controlling the children. When she was fired, she thought that her one skill, drama, had failed her. This hurt her confidence. It was 6 months before Laurie found another job.

Questions

In what way did Laurie show good initiative and motivation in the interview? Discuss how her initiative helped her get the job.

Was the manager fair in hiring Laurie for a job for which she appeared to be underqualified? Explain the reasons for your answer.

What should Laurie have done once she realized that she lacked the necessary skills?

How could Laurie have left the job gracefully before she was fired?

Focus: When Is Trying Not Enough?

Laurie's case presents another reason why employees lose jobs. Laurie lacked the skills necessary to do her job properly. She didn't know how to control the children. She was provided with pointers and tips throughout her probationary period by both the staff and manager. But, suggestions could not make up for her lack of background. Laurie tried hard to learn her job. She just couldn't gain control of the class.

Sometimes, having the proper motivation, drive, and initiative for a job is not enough. Laurie's lack of skill and training was just too big an obstacle to overcome.

When you apply for a job make sure that you are qualified. You should have at least the basic skills required for the job. You can learn other skills if training is provided. Laurie failed to recognize that she lacked the basic child development skills she would have learned in college. On-the-job training could not make up for the college education she needed.

The result was upsetting to Laurie. She felt badly about being fired and about herself. She didn't have the confidence she needed to get another job.

Getting into a job that is over your head is unwise. Sometimes, it is hard to know at the interview if you are doing this. You only realize it after you are on the job.

If you find yourself in this position, try to admit it. Move on. If possible, discuss the problem with your supervisor. Let the supervisor know that the problem was caused by a mismatch between your skills and the skills required by the job. In that way, you may be abie to get a good reference.

After all, Laurie had a lot going for her. Furthermore, Sue appreciated that. Sue would probably be willing to tell a prospective employer that Laurie had many good qualities. She could say that the job just wasn't right for Laurie.

Activities

Role-play a training session in which you are Laurie and another student is Sue. Demonstrate how you would react, as Laurie, to the frustrations of the job.

Select a job you might like to have. Find out what the job requirements are. Learn what education is required for the job. Contact several of the following sources to get this information: school counselor, library, employers, other people who work in the occupation.

Think of a job you have had where you were underqualified. It could have been a job at home, at school, or in the community. Tell the class about your experience. Describe how you felt on the job. Tell how you left the job.

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Case Study: Donna

"Why don't they let me do what I want to do?"

At the age of 21, Donna was hired as a receptionist at a health spa. Her duties included answering the phone, checking members in and out, and assisting the members in any way possible. After a couple of months, Donna's job changed. She was assigned to be a card checker. Her job was to handle the membership cards.

Donna became frustrated with this job. "It's really boring," she said. "Why don't they let me do what I want to do? I want to be an instructor or a receptionist."

Another thing that bothered Donna was the lack of a set and posted schedule. "I never know when I'm working. I hate that," she said. Donna decided to quit if she wasn't given either the instructor or receptionist job and a set schedule.

At the same time, John, her boss, was beginning to wonder if Donna could remain on the job. She was having personality conflicts with the assistant manager. John saw her attitude and job performance as irregular—great one day, terrible the next. "She's too young to know what a hard day's work is," he said.

Because of these conflicts, Donna, by mutual agreement, was transferred to another spa. There she became a full-time receptionist with a set 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule.

Questions

How do you view Donna's attitude toward her job at the health spa? How could she have expressed her feelings in a different way?

In what ways could a positive attitude have helped Donna in her work situation? How might she have reacted differently to the situation with such an attitude?

Was the manager responsible in transferring Donna to another spa? What is the risk to the new manager? What is the risk to Donna if her attitude doesn't change?

Focus: How Does a Bad Attitude Add to the Problem?

Donna allowed her feelings to control her behavior. She didn't talk about her discontent on the job. Instead, she reacted to it. Donna had problems getting along with the assistant manager. She had problems accepting her tasks.

When Donna left the job, she left the manager with one impression of her—that she has a lot to learn.

Donna's problem should have been with the job tasks, not with her attitude. It is important to discuss your job satisfaction with your supervisor. Supervisors can't know what concerns you unless you tell them. If Donna had discussed her concerns with her supervisor, she would have left the manager with a better impression of her. As it is, he considers her problem to be one of attitude, not dissatisfaction with the job.

Activities

Role-play how Donna might have expressed her dissatisfaction with the card checker job differently. Demonstrate a positive way in which Donna might have dealt with the situation.

For the rest of the class, role-play doing a job (any job) while showing a bad attitude. Ask the class to write words that describe how they would feel if they were working on the job with you.

Read through newspapers and magazines to find examples of people with bad attitudes. Share these examples with the rest of the class. Point out the kinds of situations in which such people find themselves.

Concept 15
Getting the All-Important Reference

One important consideration in leaving a job is that it creates the need to find a new job. Your chances of finding a job will be greater if you learn to leave a job gracefully.

Previous employers are not only good references, they are important references. A hiring employer wants an employee who will stay with the company once hired. This is because it costs a company money to train a new worker—even if the training is minimal.

Therefore, employers consider many factors in hiring: education, work experience, and references. A previous employer can tell the hiring employer about how you work. The previous employer knows, first hand, facts about your skills, attitudes, behaviors, and job performance. Naturally, the hiring employer will want to contact a previous employer to learn about you.

Keep this in mind when you think about leaving a job, make sure your previous employer will have good things to say about you. Leave on a positive note.

Case Study: Donna

Donna was transferred to a new health spa after several months on the job. She was hired to work from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. as a receptionist.

At about the same time, Donna took a second job working part-time in a department store. She had worked there previously. Her former boss called and asked her to help out during the holiday season. He wanted her to work 15-20 hours per week. This meant that Donna would have to work over 50

hours per week. Donna responded to this fact by saying, "It'll be hard, but I need the cash."

"It'll be hard, but I need the cash."

Donna handled both jobs until the spa hired a new manager, Bob. Bob made some changes. Namely, he changed the receptionist's schedule to a 12-hour shift. Donna hated the schedule. She couldn't handle the 12-hour shift and the department store job too.

One day, Donna called in and told Bob that she was sick. When Bob called her back the next workday, Donna told him she wasn't coming in. "I think he knows I quit," she explained later.

Bob was disappointed in the way Donna left her job. He thought it was too bad that Donna didn't explain why she felt she had to leave. "I had no problem with her at all. Everyone liked her and she got along fine with the customers," he said.

Questions

What risks did Donna take in accepting the department store job? Do you think she considered the risks when she accepted the second job? Explain your answer.

What was negative about the way Donna left the job at the spa?

What sort of recommendation will Bob be likely to give for Donna?

What could Donna have done to leave the job gracefully? How could she have avoided leaving the job at all?

Case Study: Donna (continued)

After the holiday rush, Donna continued working at the department store. She worked part-time in a number of different departments. As business slowed down, Donna's hours were reduced. At the same time, Donna's mother and grandfather were in the hospital. She wanted to spend time visiting them, but she also wanted to work more hours. Donna didn't know how to deal with these conflicts. She became discouraged and angry.

She called in sick 10 times in one month

Donna said: "I need a full-time job so I can make some money. I'm tired of moving around the store all the time." However, the family problems were also pulling at her. She started missing a lot of work. She called in sick 10 times in one month. Her manager, Frank, was concerned. "I understand that she would like to be with her family, but business is business," he said.

Frank decided to give Donna a written warning. He sent her a note saying that she needed a doctor's excuse the next time she reported sick leave. He also told her that she could take a leave of absence if she wanted.

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She walked out of the store and never returned.

Donna decided to quit. When she told Frank, he asked if she would work one more week to cover for an employee who was on vacation. Donna replied that she would. Instead, she walked out of the store and never returned.

Frank was confused about why Donna lied to him, leaving as she did. He said, "She was a good worker and has a great personality. I would have hired her back anytime. But now, I won't."

Questions

Compare the ways Donna left the spa and the department store. Do you think Donna learned anything from her first experience? Explain.

How could Donna have left the job at the department store gracefully? What could she have said to Frank to help him understand the problems she was having?

What is the advantage of discussing problems with the people involved?

Focus: Are You Planning to Work Again?

According to her employers, Donna had a lot going for her. However, she never learned how to leave a job gracefully. By talking with her manager before leaving, Donna might have left with a good reference. She might even have been able to return to work after she had worked out her personal problems.

Both of Donna's managers agreed that she was a very good worker. She had an excellent way with customers. Both managers might have hired her back if she had discussed her problems with them.

Leaving a job gracefully is the best way to get a good reference. Talk to your manager before you leave a job. See if you can work out a solution to your problems with the job. If you decide to quit, give the employer notice. Leave on good terms. You might even ask for advice on how to improve your efforts in your next job. Doing these things will leave the manager with a good impression of you. The difference between a good reference and a bad reference may be crucial when you apply for your next job.

Activities

Role-play an interview between Donna and a prospective employer. Act out the role of Donna. Have another student play the role of the employer. Explain your work record to the

employer. Try to convince the employer that you would be a good risk this time.

List five things you would like a past employer to be able to say about you. Interview two employers. Ask what they like to hear about an applicant when they contact a previous employer. Report to the class.

Case Study: Terry

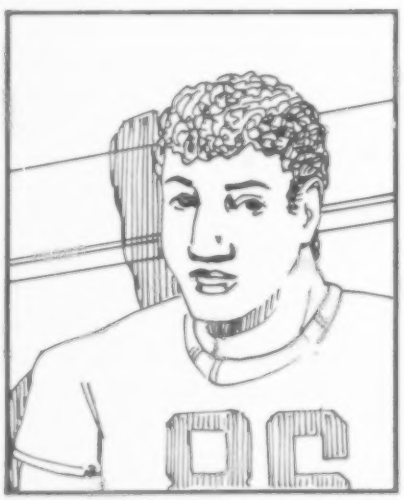
Terry is a 21-year-old male. In high school, he took a general course of study. He received Bs and Cs.

After a football injury left him partially paralyzed, Terry began bodybuilding. This activity helped him regain strength in his legs. He entered bodybuilding contests, such as Mr. Teenage Ohio.

After graduating from high school, Terry applied for a job as a trainer at a health spa. He had the job skills, so he was hired. He was very confident of the training advice he gave. The spa members all looked up to Terry and admired him for his ability.

Terry considered helping people work out as the "highlight of my day." He hoped to use this experience in "running and owning my own gym, something I've always wanted to do."

Pat, Terry's manager, also had a high regard for Terry. "He is very good, very knowledgeable, and very personable with the people," stated Pat. Terry's co-workers agreed. "Terry is just great to work with," said Maureen, a receptionist. "He keeps everyone laughing," she said.



A football injury left him partially paralyzed.

Questions

Why do you think Terry was hired?

Why did Terry do such a good job?

Can you see any problems at this point? Why or why not?

Case Study: Terry (continued)

After a time, Terry became disenchanted with the job. He listed the following complaints:

- The job was interfering with his weight lifting "a little bit."
- The daily drive to work was too long and costly.
- Having to enforce company rules was unpleasant.
- Certain janitorial jobs, such as cleaning the restrooms and changing the light bulbs, were boring.

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Terry began to think about joining the Army.

Terry began to think about joining the Army. He felt that the Army could give him the training he needed to run his own gym. It would also give him better pay.

Therefore, Terry decided that he would quit soon. When his sister became ill and was in the hospital, Terry told the manager that he needed to be home for a week to help out. The manager gave him a leave of absence for a week. At the end of the week, Terry had made the decision to go into the Army.

Terry told the spa manager that he wanted to quit to join the Army. He explained that the Army could provide him with better pay and an opportunity to take some business courses.

Terry said that he would give a 2-week notice if necessary. He explained that he was very sorry he could not stay at the spa.

Questions

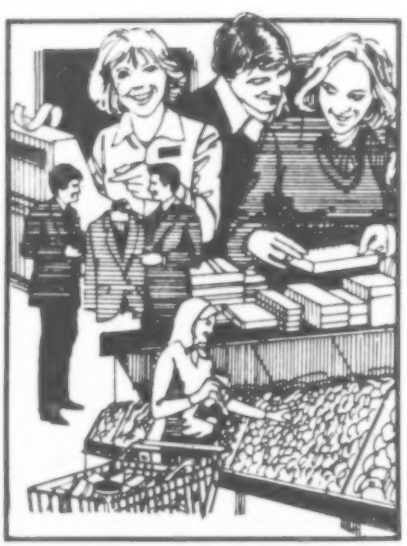
Why was it wrong for Terry to lie to his employer about the reason for his leave of absence request?

What do you think the manager would have done if Terry had given him the real reason?

What was good about the way Terry left the job?

Should Terry have quit the job before he was accepted by the Army? Why?

Focus: What Makes the Difference?



At the time of Terry's leave of absence Pat knew that Terry would probably not come back to the spa. However, he stated, "I wouldn't hesitate to call him back." Pat was impressed with Terry's attitude on the job. He liked Terry's open and responsible character. In addition, he was pleased that Terry gave a 2-week notice before he quit.

Though perhaps not an ideal situation, Terry did leave on very good terms with his employer. Pat would have no questions about giving Terry back his old job or about recommending him for another job.

This case also points up another reason why people leave jobs. They leave to gain training and to increase their wages or other financial benefits.

Terry planned his leaving well. He quit at a time when the manager would not be left shorthanded. He also gave a 2-week notice so the manager could make plans to replace him. Thus, Terry benefited. He would now be able to get a good reference from his employer. Furthermore, he knew that the job would be open to him if he decided to return.

Activities

Taking a week to think about his future helped Terry. Think about a period of time you have taken for a similar reason. Explain to the class how this time was useful to you. Tell why/how careful thought enabled you to make a decision.

Write a paragraph explaining what was positive about the way Terry planned for his job future. Give examples from the case study to show that Terry had his future in mind all along.

Think back and compare the case studies in this booklet. Remember the problems depicted in the cases: lack of communication, lying, carelessness, disinterest, lack of qualifications, and bad attitude. Note that one specific problem was highlighted in each case. However, no case was that simple. In each job situation, a number of factors caused the person to leave the job. Select one case. List all the factors that led up to the person leaving the job.

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Concept 16
Requesting an Exit Interview

As you have seen in the case studies, there are various ways of leaving jobs. Some people just walk off the job. Others are fired. Some "quit" in mutual agreement with the boss. None of the employees in the study left their jobs in a perfect manner. All neglected to ask for an exit interview with their employers.

What is an exit interview? An exit interview is simply a talk between you and your boss about your employment situation. During the interview, you can get advice on how to improve your job performance and attitude. Sitting down and discussing these things with your employer will help you become a better worker. It may also get you that critically important good reference.

The exit interview also gives you a chance to explain why you are quitting or why you think you're being fired. In it, you can show that you indeed care about your performance.

A third benefit to the exit interview is that it may enable you to stay on the job. Your employer may be satisfied with your work and disappointed with your leaving. By sitting down and talking to your boss, you may eliminate confusion about your behavior. This could have been the case with many of the workers in the study.

To arrange for an exit interview, ask to schedule an appointment with your boss. Indicate that you want the meeting at a time convenient to him or her. Then, think about what you will say and how best to say it. During the interview, avoid being overly critical of the employer, the workplace, or yourself.

For example, if Laurie were to have an exit interview at the child care center, she should not be too hard on herself. She should not say, "You should have known not to hire me," or "I'm just not good enough; I could never learn this job." Instead, she should be honest but positive. She should say, "I think I would need more education to do this job well. But I still learned a lot from the experience."

Lastly, be courteous and appreciative. Thank the employer for spending time with you.

Activity

Act out an exit interview with another student. Select the role of employee or employer. Discuss reasons why you are leaving a job.

After the role play, consider the benefits of the interview. As the employee, do you feel that you are on better terms with the employer? Do you think the employer has a better opinion of you as a result of the interview?

As the employer, do you feel that you know the employee better? Do you understand what might have caused his or her behavior? Do you think the situation can be remedied so that the employee won't have to leave?

Discuss these questions.

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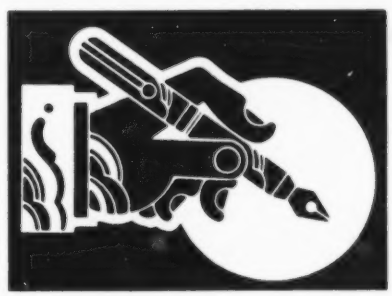
Appendix

Guidelines for Completing an Application

Part A

Know the information you will be asked to provide on the job application. You may know some of the information from memory. Other information you will have to look up in records, phone books, and so forth. As you read each item below, write the appropriate information on a separate sheet of paper. Take this paper with you when you go to apply for a job. Refer to it as you fill out the application. Then you will be sure the information you give is accurate.

Record Personal Data



- Print your name in upper/lower case. Print your first, middle, and last name.
- Print your Social Security number. Copy the number from your Social Security card or from your driver's license. If you don't have a number, apply for one at the Social Security office in your town.
- Print your current address, including city, state, zip code, county, and township. Record how long you have lived at this address.
- Print the telephone numbers where you can be reached. Include the area code.
- If you cannot check "Yes" for U.S. citizen, print your visa number and the type of visa you have.

Record Information about Your Education and Schooling

- List the names and addresses of schools you have attended.
- List the dates you have attended each school, the courses of

study, the grades completed, and the diploma given.
- If you have received a GED, list the date received. Also list the school or institution from which you received the certificate.

Record Information about Your Work Experience

- List the names of past employers and the dates of employment. (Also list a current employer if you are now working part-time.)
- List the job responsibilities you have had in each job. Also list the equipment you have used and any training you received.
- List any volunteer jobs in the same way you would list paid work experience. List your position, the hours you worked, the dates you worked, responsibilities, equipment you used, and any training you received.
- This is a good place to list your skills. List the skills you brought to each job. Also list other skills you have acquired while on the job.

Answer Questions Positively

- Give positive reasons for leaving a previous job. Do not give negative responses such as the following:
  —The boss didn't like me.
  —I didn't think the pay was high enough.
  —I didn't like the other workers.
  —I was injured on the job.
  —I was sent to jail.
  —I was fired.
  —I was bored with the work.
  Instead, use the following kinds of positive responses:
  —I wanted a job with more responsibility.
  —I wanted a job with more opportunities for advancement.
  —I became a full-time student.
  —I became interested in another type of work.
  —I started my own business.
  —I left town to care for my ailing father.
- Don't consider common ailments when answering questions about health. Most people have colds, flu, aches, and pains some time in life. Employers want to know if you can do the job. Write that your health is excellent if you have nothing seriously wrong with you.

List Good References

- Choose former employers, teachers, and business people who know you and who will say good things about you. Don't list relatives.

- Choose people who can be easily contacted. Employers may need to contact these people quickly.
- Ask the people you want to list as references if you may do so. Tell them when they might expect calls from employers.
- List the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and possibly the company names of your references.

Part B

Record all information in a neat, concise, complete, and correct manner. Follow the guidelines given below.

Read the Instructions Carefully

- Watch for the words "Do not write in this space." Make sure you follow the direction.
- Ask questions if you do not understand an instruction.

Write in a Neat, Legible Manner

- Erase carefully.
- Print if directed to do so or if your handwriting is poor.

Spell Correctly

- Find out how to spell words you will need to use before you go to apply for the job. Make sure you know the spelling of technical terms related to the job you are seeking.
- If you are unsure of a spelling when you are in the employer's office, use a word you know how to spell.

Fill in the Application Completely

- If a question is one you cannot answer, write N/A (for not applicable) in the blank. Or draw a dash in the answer space to show you have seen the question.

Be Honest but Don't Volunteer Too Much Information

- Do not mention disabilities on the application, unless the disability could interfere with your ability to do the job. However, you can and should mention any disabilities in the interview.

- If you have a criminal conviction, you can do the following:
  —Leave the space blank if the crime was minor. This information is hard for employers to get. It must be released by you.
  —Leave the space blank if you have been convicted of a felony (major crime). Discuss the topic in the interview. If the application states that you *must* mention the conviction, do so.

Review Your Completed Application

- Make sure the information you have recorded is accurate.
- If you made a mistake and cannot correct it neatly, ask for a second application.

Guidelines for Interviewing

Arrive at the Interview Prepared and on Time

- Find out the date and time of the interview.
- Find out the name of the interviewer and the office where you will be interviewed.
- Find out where you should park if you will be driving to the interview.
- Have enough gas in your car if you will be driving.
- Know the bus schedule if you will be taking the bus.
- Allow extra time for dressing, walking, traffic, and weather.
- Arrive at the interview early so you will have a chance to calm yourself before you meet the interviewer.
- Call to inform the interviewer if you are delayed or ill.
- Take along a resume if you did not attach one to your application.
- Take along your competency list or profile if you have one. If you do not have such a list, ask your instructor to help you assemble one.
- Take samples of your work with you, if possible. For example, if you are a graphic designer, you might take along some of your best sketches or other work to show the interviewer.

Present a Positive Appearance

- Make sure you are clean and well groomed. Shower and shave; use deodorant; clean your fingernails; wash, comb, and style hair; use limited amounts of makeup; use perfume or after-shave lotion sparingly; brush teeth.
- Get an adequate amount of sleep the night before the interview.
- Know the dress requirements for the job. For example, learn if suits are the only acceptable attire. Select attire that shows your respect for the interviewer and the firm. Your clothes should indicate that you are responsible. Avoid flashy or

trendy clothes. They give a "play" rather than "business" focus. Conservative clothes are more appropriate.
- Make sure your clothes are clean and well pressed.
- Make sure your clothes are the correct length and size.
- Avoid clothes that are too tight, short, or revealing.

Use Proper Language

- Use proper terminology. Know and use job-related terms.
- Use correct grammar.
- Use proper vocabulary. Avoid using slang (such as *tough, cool*) and offensive words (such as *stupid, dumb, mean*).
- Speak clearly, pronouncing words carefully.

Use Proper Nonverbal Communication

- Stand erect and shake the interviewer's hand in greeting. This will convey self-confidence.
- Give full attention to the interviewer. Look at the interviewer and listen carefully to what is being said.
- Avoid such habits as chewing gum, smoking, biting nails, and so forth.
- Show enthusiasm through facial expressions as well as through tone of voice.
- Use good posture to show interest and involvement.

Communicate a Positive Attitude

- Answer all questions in a positive manner. (See suggestions on the last page of these guidelines.)
- Be direct and honest in what you say.
- Speak courteously and respectfully.
- Avoid saying anything that is or appears to be negative, particularly about previous employers or teachers.
- Vary expression in your voice and face to show interest and enthusiasm.
- Let the employer know you are aware that a beginner's tasks are sometimes routine.

Show Interest in the Job

- Ask about the job tasks and hours of work.
- Ask about opportunities for promotion.

Answer Questions Correctly, Completely, and Intelligently

The following are some of the questions employers ask applicants. Read the questions and the recommendations for answering them.

- What can you tell me about yourself?
  This question is asked to find out about your skills. It is the perfect time for you to "sell" yourself. Tell about your interests, abilities, skills, education, and experiences. Explain how you will be a benefit to the company.

- Why do you want this job?
  Explain what you hope to do *in this company and in this job*. Explain how you hope to use your interests, abilities, skills, education, and experiences. Explain other goals. Do you hope to become a supervisor? Do you hope to learn new skills and techniques?

- Why do you want to work for this company?
  Think about the facts you learned about the company. Or go to the library. Find more facts in the newspaper files. Get company pamphlets, brochures, reports, etc. Read them before you apply for the job. Talk with company employees that you know.

  State some good points about the company. Tell where you learned your facts.

- Why should we hire you?
  Relate this answer to answers from questions one and two.

  Tell about any records of your skills. Show the interviewer a record of your competencies if you have one. Tell what you have learned through your experiences. Tell some of your work maturity skills. Give examples to show you are—

—dependable	—reliable	—cooperative
—diligent	—thorough	—considerate of others
—willing to learn	—enthusiastic	—respectful
—honest	—loyal	—responsible

- What is your greatest strength?
  Mention a skill you have that is needed in the job. State how this skill will help you to do a good job.

- What is your greatest weakness?
  This question asks you to mention a *current* weakness. Remember to be positive. Present a weakness as a good point. For example, say—

  "My weakness is that I'm too diligent. Sometimes I must work overtime to make sure a job is done the right way."

  This statement shows that you care about your work, you have high standards, and you are willing to work overtime to

see that a job is done well. (It is another way of saying you sometimes fall behind schedule, but it gives a good reason for why you do so.)

- What jobs have you had?
  Refer to your resume. Describe the knowledge and skills you acquired in each job. Remember that employers are most interested in the kinds of activities or job duties held. For example, tell the interviewer that your work at a local fast-food restaurant helped you develop skills to deal with customers and to be productive.

- What is your training and education?
  Refer to your resume. State your training and education. Explain how it has prepared you for the job.

- What are your hobbies?
  Mention several of your hobbies. Explain that they are just some of the ways you spend your free time. Mention your volunteer activities. Mention any community activities. Mention educational activities, such as book groups or continuing education courses.

- Do you plan to return to school?
  Answer this question *only* as it relates to the job for which you are interviewing. Do you think you may want to take evening courses to upgrade your skills? Say so. Would you consider taking a training program? Say so. Let the interviewer know you want to do the best job possible for this company. Let him or her know you are willing to work to improve your knowledge and skills.

- Why did you leave your last job?
  If you left to continue your education, say so. If you left to become self-employed, say so. But if you left because of problems on the job, explain.

  Explain why you were not suited for the job. Explain what you learned from the experience. Give names of other jobs (and employers) that were good experiences for you. Suggest the interviewer call them for references.

- Why do you show gaps in your employment?
  Explain planned gaps. For example—
  "I returned to school full time," or
  "I became self-employed."

  Explain other gaps by saying—
  "I was exploring various occupations. I was unsure of my career path. Now I know the type of job for which I am best suited. I am looking forward to pursuing that work."

- Do you work well with others? How did you relate to your supervisors?
  Again, describe some of your work maturity skills. Give examples.

- How do you feel about working overtime?
  State your enthusiasm about the job. Show willingness to work overtime when necessary. If you will need advance notice to work overtime, say so. Explain why (for example, you may hope to ride in a car pool).

- Do you have any serious injuries or illnesses?
  Be honest about serious illnesses. Mention the illness. Mention any limitations you will have. For example—
  Illness: rheumatic fever
  Limitation: "I can't lift anything that weighs over 40 lbs."

  Mention why you feel the limitation will not affect the way you do the job. Mention how the illness has not affected other work you have done. You could say, for example—

  "I don't expect this to be a problem. Secretaries are rarely asked to do heavy lifting. If I am, I'm sure I can trade tasks with another worker. Maybe I could go to the mail room if another person could lift a box for me."

  Or explain steps you have taken to adapt to the illness or injury.
  Injury: slipped disc
  "I used to be a stock clerk. After my back trouble, I had to prepare for another type of work. That is why I studied and trained to become a bookkeeper. There is little heavy lifting required of bookkeepers."

- Do you have any disabilities?
  Be honest about obvious disabilities. Mention them. Give examples of how they have not affected your work. Explain why you expect to perform well in this job.

- Have you ever been arrested or sent to jail?
  Be honest about these facts. They are easy to trace. However, always be positive. Point out the lesson you have learned through these experiences. Explain your goal to begin a new life pattern. Explain how this job is one step toward that goal.

- What salary do you expect?
  Mention your knowledge of the general salary range for this job. Explain that you expect a reasonable salary. But explain that opportunities for promotion and raises are equally important to you.

This material was taken from the Technical Assistance for Occupational Skills Training Project, *Job Search Skills*, sponsored by the Office of Youth Programs, U.S. Department of Labor. Columbus, Ohio: The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1981.

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